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ABSTRACT

Designed for grades 3-5, this student text contains 30 narratives (10 for each grade level) written to help readers develop a positive self image and to promote career goals based upon personal interests and abilities, not on sex or ethnicity. All episodes focus on the travels of six pen pals from New York, Chicago and California who begin their adventures the summer after completing seventh grade. During the first summer (level 1), the students tour California. The next summer (level 2), they investigate colonial and revolutionary America by traveling throughout the eastern coast in a specially equipped van, Probe I. The final summer, (level 3) they use Probe II to scientifically explore a north central state, several mountain states, and parts of the Pacific Northwest. The six characters have unisex names to emphasize their personal attributes rather than sex roles. Throughout their travels the youngsters encounter people working in a wide variety of careers. Composite illustrations accompany the text. This reader is part of an instructional program called "Probing Our Wonderful Environmental Resources" (P.O.W.E.R.) developed through a special project called the Production of Women's Educational Resources.

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ED215861

P.O.W.E.R.

PROBING OUR WONDERFUL ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

PEOPLE & PLACES U.S.A.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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NARRATIVES
LEVELS 1-3

School District 11
Bronx, New York

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Women's Educational Equity Act Program
U.S. Department of Education

PEOPLE AND PLACES
U.S.A.

NARRATIVES
LEVELS 1-3

Production of Women's
Educational Resources
Project

School District 11
Bronx, New York

Women's Educational Equity Act Program
U.S. Department of Education
Terrel Bell, Secretary

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Level 1

Level 1 Contents

TIME: Present, Summer

LOCALE: California

SYNOPSIS: Six seventh-grade pen pals from New York, Chicago and California meet and travel through various parts of California

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Project Ideas:

SACRAMENTO

Chris and Nicky were at the airport in Sacramento. They were waiting for their pen pals to arrive.

Chris said, "How will we know who they are?"

Nicky replied, "I have their pictures here in my pocket. Oops! I think I forgot them!"

Suddenly, two children walked toward Chris and Nicky. They were wearing T-shirts with their names printed on them. One of the children, named Jackie, grinned and turned around. Chris and Nicky laughed when they read the message: "Look what just flew in from the Windy City!"

Ms. Fernandez, Nicky's mother, smiled and said to Ronnie and Jackie, "I'm glad your plane from Chicago has arrived. Now, where are the children from New York? Their flight 408 was supposed to land at 10:30 A.M. and it is now 12:30 P.M."

They soon learned that the plane would be delayed two more hours because of stormy weather in New York.

So, Nicky's mother took the children to the observation deck. From there they could see the control tower with the weather instruments on its roof. The children could also see men and women hard at work preparing airplanes for flight. They listened to the voices of the air traffic controllers coming over a telephone. It was fun to pick

Project Ideas:

up the telephone and hear the men and women who worked in the control tower, directing airplane traffic on the ground and in the air near the airport.

"What an interesting job that must be," thought Nicky. "I wonder if I could learn to do it someday."

Time passed quickly and Les and Bobby arrived. Les told everyone how they were scared by a terrible hailstorm while they were flying. She had overheard the cabin attendant say that the hailstones were tremendous in size--about 3 centimeters wide.

What a happy meeting it was! It was going to be a wonderful summer.

Ms. Fernandez drove the children to the ranch where they would be spending part of their vacation. The four visitors were so excited as they looked at the new sights and began thinking of all the fun they would have. Bobby was surprised to see no tall buildings, only wide open spaces. Where did everyone live? Were there many children in this part of the country?

Nicky's mind was far away. She kept thinking of the cow that was about to calve. So she told the children about it. The scenery was forgotten. The children asked question after question. At last they reached the Rancho Fernandez!

Project Ideas:

Even before they unloaded the van, everyone ran to the barn. What a delightful surprise! Instead of giving birth to one calf, the cow had had twins. She was busy licking them. A cowhand was in the barn with the animals. She asked Nicky to think of names for the newborns.

"I know!" exclaimed Nicky. "Why don't we name them for our guests?"

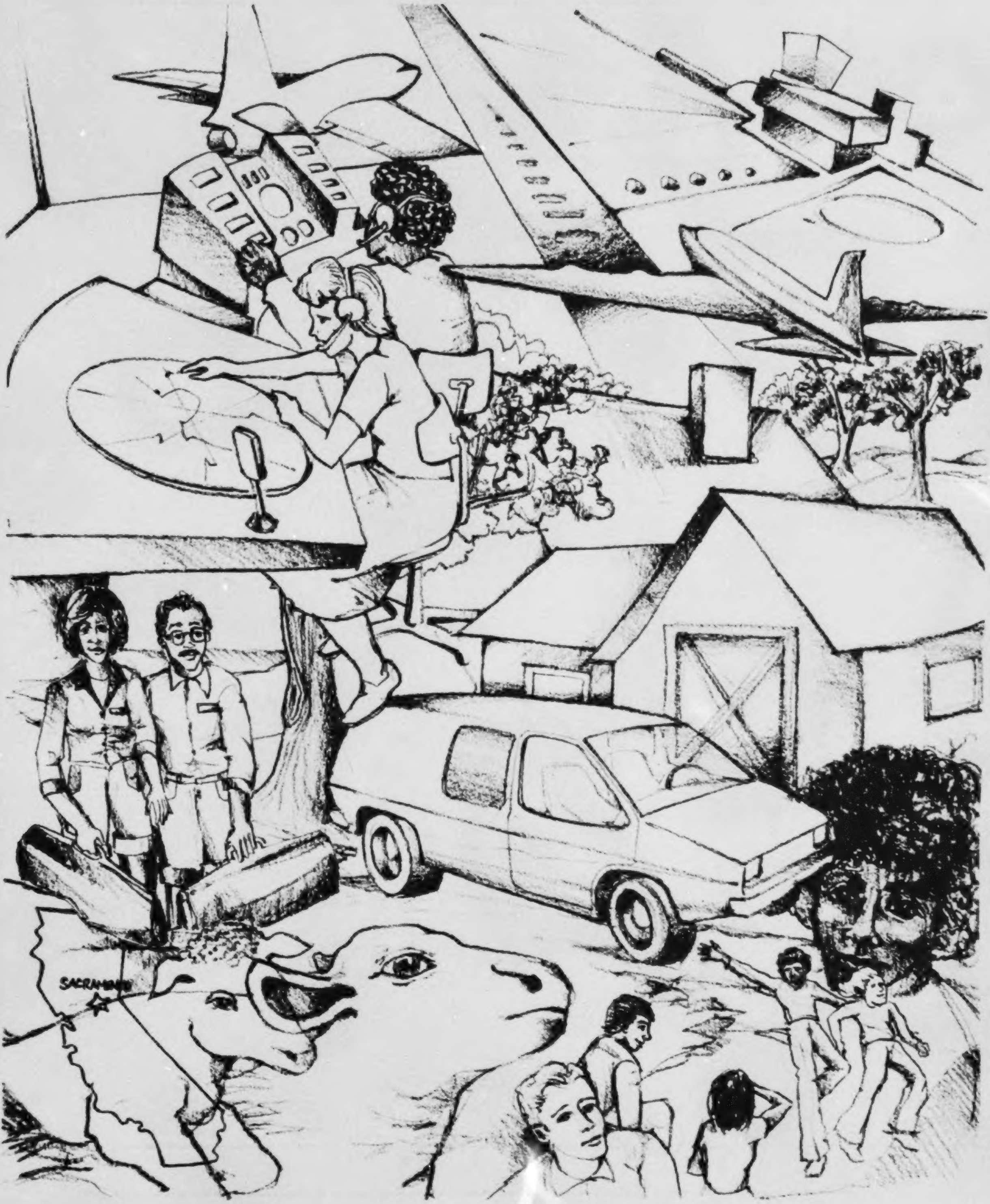
Ronnie and Jackie whispered together for a few moments and Jackie giggled, saying, "Let's name one Windy."

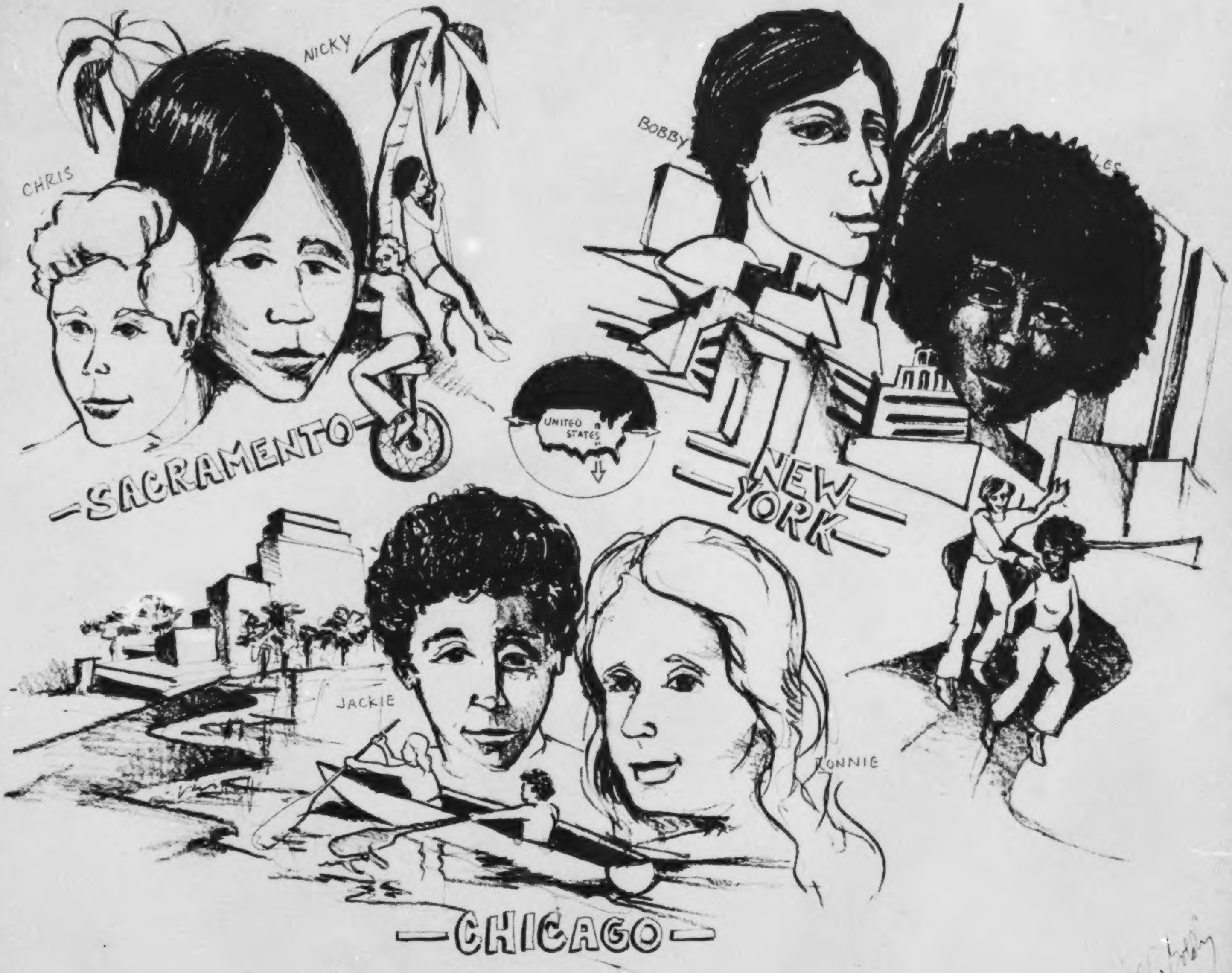
"How about calling the other calf Big Apple," cried Bobby. Ms. Fernandez agreed.

"What a great way to start our visit to California," thought Jackie. He didn't know then that they would have many adventures and learn many new things.

Ronnie began to keep a diary that night. She decided to write down everything that happened so she would remember this unusual holiday.

Project Ideas:


SACRAMENTO


NICKY
CHRIS
SACRAMENTO
BOBBY
LES
UNITED STATES
NEW YORK
JACKIE
RONNIE
CHICAGO

During the first week at the ranch, Ronnie had a chance to write about an exciting and scary event.

What a day it had been! Nicky had taken the children exploring. As they walked around the ranch, they saw many sights. There were woods, streams, caves, a wooden bridge, a graveyard and even an old gold mine. It felt like a hundred-mile hike.

At breakfast, Ms. Fernandez had made a map to follow. They had reached the old train station. No one used it anymore. The grass was tall and everything looked broken down. The station sign hung on one hinge. It made squeaky noises as it moved in the wind. It was getting dark--time to head back home.

Chris pointed to the deserted shacks nearby. He said that they might be haunted. On a stormy night, people had heard and seen a ghost there.

Bobby listened and shivered. "Could this be a real ghost town, like the one on T.V.? He shivered again, thinking, "Am I afraid? Or, is it just the wind?

The wind had begun to blow hard. The sign swung faster. The sky turned black. Suddenly, it looked like midnight. Lightning flashed. Thunder clapped. Then the rain came, hard and fast.

Nicky lead them to one of the shacks. They all began to run to get out of the rain. Inside, they

Project Ideas:

sat down. There was nothing to do but wait and they were tired. The shack was dark and dusty and the windowpanes were shattered. What a perfect time and place for a ghost story.

Jackie asked Chris to tell them more about the ghost. Bobby moved closer to Jackie. Chris and Nicky told the tale. They had heard it many times around the campfire. The ghost was an old miner who banged on mining pans. Years ago, she was the only one left after all the other miners had given up hope of finding gold. She finally disappeared deep in the mine. Now they say she comes out on stormy nights. She calls the other miners to come and see her gold. If you listen carefully, you can still hear her.

Bobby began to tremble again. Then Jackie grabbed his arm. He had heard an unusual noise. It was a loud clanging sound that seemed to be coming closer. It grew louder and louder. Then it stopped. They heard someone calling out. Could the ghost story be true?

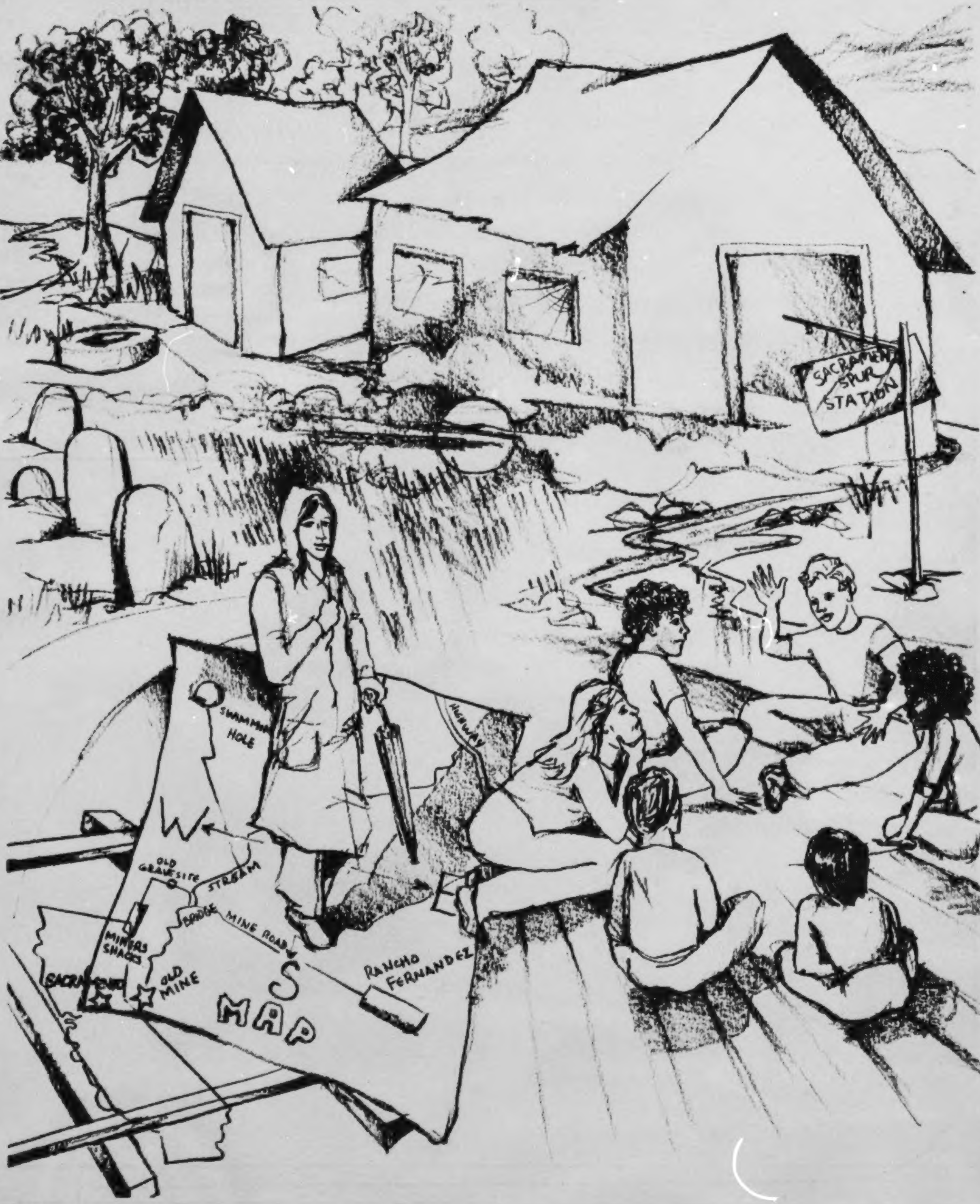
A quick flash of lightning made them glance toward the window. A face appeared and was gone. It must be true! Then the door opened slowly and the ghost stepped in. They all screamed, but then, how they laughed when they saw Ms. Fernandez in her rain poncho! A very ghostly outfit indeed! She had come to get them.

Project Ideas:

Wow! What a relief and what an exciting way to get home! Ms. Fernandez had decided to use the old handcar. It had been used by the miners long ago. Now, it was used by the ranch hands to get to places quickly. Ms. Fernandez had pumped it like a seesaw along the tracks to the old station.

As they hopped in, Bobby shivered again. But this time he knew it was because it was going to rain. So he helped everybody pump hard. Tonight he was going to enjoy T.V. They were going to have a good ghost story on his favorite program.

Project Ideas:


SACRAMEN
SPUR
STATION
SWIMMIN
HOLE
HIGHWAY
W
OLD
GRAVESITE
STREAM
BRIDGE
MINE ROAD
MINERS
SHACKS
OLD
MINE
SACRAMENTO
S
MAP
RANCHO
FERNANDEZ
E

The children spent several more days on the ranch before they started out on their next adventure. They had planned a camping trip to Yosemite National Park. Ms. Fernandez drove them in a southerly direction toward their destination. Before they entered the south entrance of the park, they passed the big trees. Some of these old trees were so wide that a car could easily pass through their trunks.

When they arrived at the national park, the group was met by a park ranger. She told them where to camp. Although it took a while for them to find their spot, it took them very little time to set up their tents.

Early the next morning the park ranger led them on a hike along one of the trails. There they saw one of the highest waterfalls in the world. It plunged 2,425 feet down a rock wall. In other places they discovered sparkling lakes, rushing streams and jagged mountain peaks. There was so much to see!

The children decided to visit the Yosemite Museum, which had a collection of Native American artifacts. It also had an exhibit of the wildlife found in the park. The exhibits interested the children, but they were getting tired. So, Chris thought of a way to relax and still take advantage of the surroundings. They could fish in the lake. That evening the children cooked the fish they had caught, over an open

Project Ideas:

fire. The children agreed that they had never tasted such good fish.

Tired and happy, the children crawled into their own sleeping bags and quickly fell asleep--everyone, that is, except Bobby, who was too excited or just too homesick to sleep. Perhaps it was the dark or even the unfamiliar sounds he heard. He just could not fall asleep.

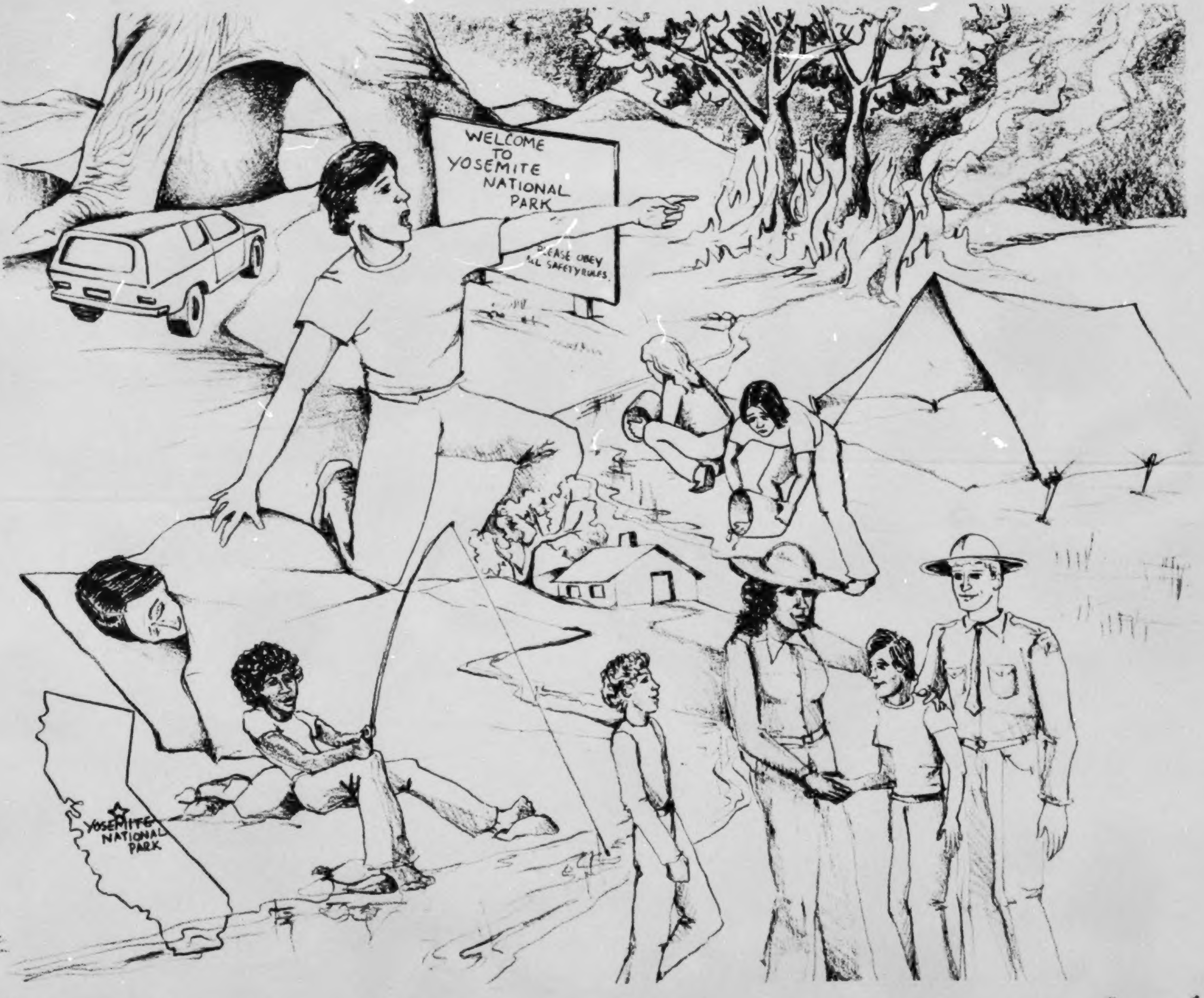
As he lay thinking, he saw an unusual flash of light a short distance away. Bobby became frightened and did not know what to do. He crawled out of his sleeping bag. Should he wake the others? He was so afraid and he did not want the others to know it.

Just as he was standing up, Bobby saw flames shooting up in the air. He realized that the danger was near. He also remembered that the park ranger had told them that it had not rained in many days.

Quickly, he went from person to person, calling them to wake up. They all got up and hurried to warn other campers about the danger.

It was not long before the campers set up a "bucket brigade" to help put out the fire. Bobby had become a hero because he was too frightened of the dark to fall asleep.

Project Ideas:


WELCOME TO YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK
PLEASE OBEY ALL SAFETY RULES
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

One day Ms. Fernandez took the children to Death Valley. Here is what Ronnie wrote in her diary:

I remember how it all started. We were talking. "What do you children know about Death Valley?" Ms. Fernandez wanted to know.

"My folks told me about a television show they used to watch called 'Death Valley Days,'" Bobby remarked. "The stories took place in a desert--you know, hot and dry."

"You bet!" Jackie chirped in. "It is one of the hottest places in the world. My sister told me that the temperature gets up to 120° Fahrenheit, or about 49° Celsius."

I told them what I had read about Death Valley. "It's about 140 miles long and about 15 miles wide, at least, that's what I read. And besides being hot, it's full of wild animals that roam about at night."

"Wild animals!" exclaimed Jackie and Les at the same time.

"Sure," I added. "You know, bobcats and coyotes and things like that."

"Well, is it safe for us to ride across that place?" Chris asked.

I informed him that it was and Ms. Fernandez laughed and said that we needn't worry. We would be snug inside a van rolling along at 55 miles per hour.

The next morning we were on our way, riding east on Route 100. The sun had not yet risen when

Project Ideas:

we started on the road. Ms. Fernandez had decided to leave at three in the morning so that we would miss the heat of the desert in the daytime. We all knew that the drive would take more than four hours. All the kids were sleeping in the van--everyone, that is, but me. Ms. Fernandez let me ride up in front with her because I was so excited that I could not sleep.

It was hard to see anything in the darkness, but I listened to the hum of the engine and thought I heard the night howls of coyotes and the cries of bobcats. Everything seemed to be going smoothly. The sound of the whirring wheels soon had my head nodding in sleep, but that didn't last long. There was first a loud explosion, then a terrific bump which shook me out of my seat.

There I was on the floor of the van, looking up at Ms. Fernandez. She was clutching the steering wheel, trying to keep the van on the road. It seemed to be a difficult job. The screams and cries from the back of the van weren't helping a bit. The van suddenly came to a halt off the road on a clump of desert grass. We were surrounded by darkness and the eerie sounds of the night prowlers, as well as by the heat.

"Is everyone all right back there?" Ms. Fernandez asked anxiously.

One by one, the others crawled out of the rear

Project Ideas:

of the van. We looked at the front.

"Can the van move?" I wanted to know. I found out pretty soon. Not only had the tire blown, but the engine was leaking water and the lights were no longer working. To top it off, our CB had shorted out. "Keep calm," I told myself. "In an emergency you've got to think fast and not panic! Now, just what can I do?"

If only the van's flashers were working. Suddenly, an idea came to me. A flashlight! Ms. Fernandez had one in the glove compartment. I knew just what to do! Hopping into the van, feeling my way carefully in the darkness, I grabbed what I knew was a flashlight. Now, from all that I had read, I knew that if any people were within a two-mile range, they would see our lights, since light travels in a straight line.

I stood in the road and started flashing my light: three short flashes, three long, then three short again. I paused. Then I began the signals over. Over and over, I repeated the flashes.

It seemed like such a long time. I was tired. The flashlight was getting dimmer and the desert seemed to be closing around us.

All of a sudden Bobby shouted, "Look!" We turned to where he pointed. A faint light

Project Ideas:

seemed to be coming toward us.

Soon we could see that there were two lights, the headlights of a moving truck. As the lights came nearer, everyone jumped up and down, cheering. At last we had company. Maybe it would be a friend.

The lights came closer to us and stopped. The driver jumped down from the cab of the truck. She had been on her way to Scotty's Castle, a part of Death Valley to the north of us. She had decided to investigate because she had seen the flashes of light.

"Those flashes were in Morse code," she said. "That's why I came to check them out. Who sent the signal?"

I stepped forward. She put her hand out to shake mine.

"That was a clever idea!" she exclaimed. "If I had not seen your signal, I might have thought it was a mirage. You are a lifesaver. I'll radio for help on my CB. Meanwhile, all of you hop into the truck. It's getting mighty warm out here."

I felt happy and proud, and even though I was still excited, I fell asleep right away. It had been a long morning.

Project Ideas:

Another day, Ms. Fernandez took the children to the Mojave Desert. Les, too, was keeping a diary, and here is what she wrote for that day:

The part of the vacation that I will never forget was the trip to the Mojave Desert. After resting at the ranch for a few days, we pestered Ms. Fernandez to continue our California tour. At last the van was repaired and we were off again.

It was a long ride but a lot of fun. We all joined in a sing-along, and Jackie entertained us with his corny jokes. He even fooled us with a toy rattlesnake. I was busy taking a million pictures. The others teased me for being so quiet as we rode along. Still, I could feel that they liked me and I was happy being with my new friends.

The Mojave Desert was even more beautiful than Ms. Fernandez had described. Just before we arrived, it had rained and many flowers were in bloom. I noticed white daisies and some red lilies just like ones I had seen in a florist shop at home. Nicky told us that the cactus had juice inside. She said that people could chop a cactus stem and squeeze out its juice to drink. I learned that even small animals feed on cacti. Everyone was talking at once and pointing out the windows.

Bobby shouted, "Look at that cactus! It must be 12 feet tall."

Project Ideas:

I really wanted to take a picture of that cactus, with my friends standing around it. I asked Ms. Fernandez to stop the van. She decided it was a good spot for us to explore and stretch our legs. So out we jumped. We looked in the burrows of the desert rodents but the only animals we spied were jackrabbits, some toads in puddles and one tiny, spiny lizard. Jackie scooted after one to catch it, probably to put it in one of our beds some night. All of a sudden we heard a loud cry. When we ran towards the sound, there was Jackie, holding his leg, howling in pain. Nearby was a diamondback--a poisonous rattlesnake, slithering back under a rock. All the kids were screaming and I shouted, "Don't move, Jackie!" Since my dad was a nurse, I knew Jackie needed help right away.

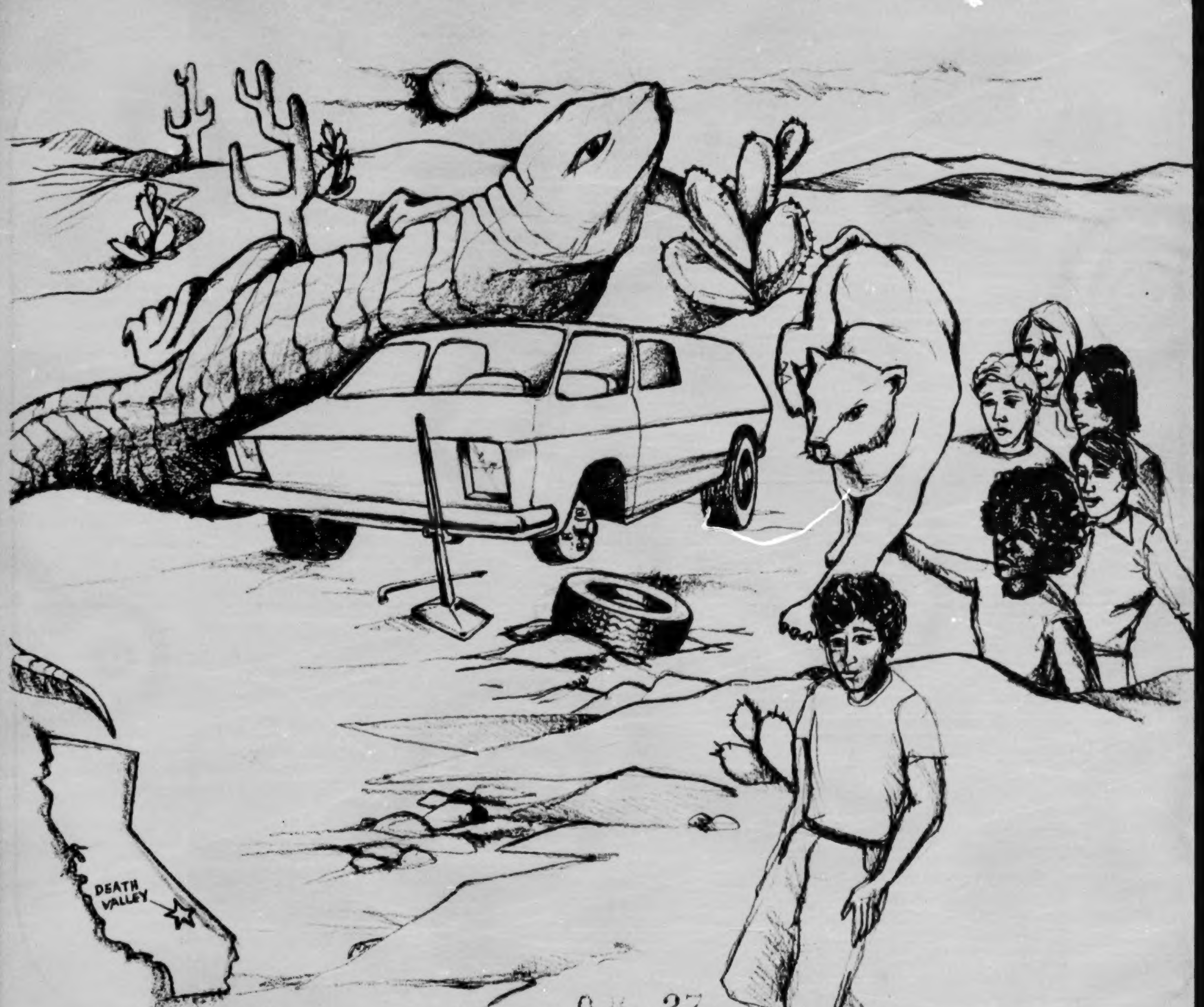
You know, the other kids always called me "Doc" because I had a first-aid kit. I felt a little silly but now it really came in handy! First, I fastened my belt above the bite wound, and then I ran back to the van to get the first-aid kit. In the meantime, Ms. Fernandez was already using her new CB to get a doctor. I washed the wound with peroxide, hoping to wash away some of the poison. Poor Jackie! He was so pale and still from shock.

It seemed like a long time passed before we heard the roar of a helicopter. When the chopper landed, a woman and a man hopped out and one of them

Project Ideas:

examined Jackie. The pilot helped carry Jackie back to the 'copter'. When they heard that I had cleaned and bandaged Jackie's leg, they were surprised and pleased, and said that I'd really helped. They asked me to ride with Jackie to the hospital. It was great! The view of the desert from above was even more beautiful, but I was too excited to take a single picture.

Project Ideas:


DEATH VALLEY

PALOMAR

Darkness had spread quickly.

Ronnie looked up at the cloudless sky and exclaimed, "I have never seen so many stars at one time in my life "

Les remarked, "That's only because we are so far away from the big cities with their lights and air pollution. The lights and dust make it difficult to see the sky."

Bobby said, "Oh, that reminds me. Telescope observatories are usually built on mountains and far away from big cities, so the stars can be seen more clearly. I also heard that some of the biggest observatories are in California. I only we could get to see the Palomar Mountain Observatory.

Ms. Fernandez must have read their minds. She was ready for this next trip. She had a pilot friend who was willing to fly them to Palomar. She also had an astronomer friend who worked at Palomar. Arrangements were made for the trip. The astronomer was to give them a special tour of Palomar, one that most people did not get.

A half-moon was very bright that evening. Les pointed out that the craters on the moon were easier to see when there was a half-moon than when the moon was full. She pointed out the Big Dipper and explained that one could tell the direction of north by following the pointer star.

Project Ideas:

They started out for Palomar early the next day.

When they arrived at Palomar, all they saw was a huge, mile-high mountain. As they drove up a winding two-lane highway in their rented car, they were able to see a building on top of the mountain. It looked like a planetarium. The building was large. There were no signs of tourists. Ms. Fernandez's astronomer friend led them into an air-conditioned room. There they saw photographs of stars and galaxies. They also saw the huge telescope.

The astronomer explained that they were being treated to a very special tour that the public was not able to see. She pushed a button and the dome opened, revealing the sky. When she pushed another button, the huge telescope turned. It moved about as if it were looking for a special star.

As the group looked around, she explained that this was one of the largest telescopes in the world. She said that it had taken about one year for the huge glass mirror to cool off after it had been melted and poured! The astronomer pushed still another button and the telescope moved in a new direction. A tiny cage at the top of the telescope had a seat for the astronomer, and there she could direct the telescope to point to the part of the heavens she wanted to study.

Many unexplained objects in space were now

Project Ideas:

able to be seen through this huge telescope. The instrument was so large that it could gather light from parts of the sky that no one had been able to observe before. The lights from these distant objects could be recorded on photographs.

Nicky asked, "Can we look in the telescope?"

The astronomer explained that it is used mostly at night, when it is easier to see the stars. At night, no one is allowed into the observatory. At that time the astronomers are busy taking pictures. They are also checking the temperatures of the stars and galaxies they are studying.

Ronnie, who had been listening very carefully, asked, "Can you really see more stars here than we can in Chicago? I'd really like to see them all."

"Yes, that is true," said the astronomer. If you are interested in learning about the stars, you may come to Palomar to study them someday."

Ronnie looked up at her as she smiled and thought, "How beautiful it would be to know enough to be an astronomer working here at Palomar! It would be like being a true explorer of the unknown."

As the astronomer pushed another button, Bobby looked up at the tiny cage on top of the telescope. He, too, thought, "If I were the astronomer sitting there, what would I get to look at, explore and discover?"

Project Ideas:

This time when the astronomer pushed a special control button, the huge telescope turned back to its original position, ready for her co-workers who would be using it that night. The dome closed and for a moment there was darkness in the observatory. When the doors opened, the children realized it was still daytime.

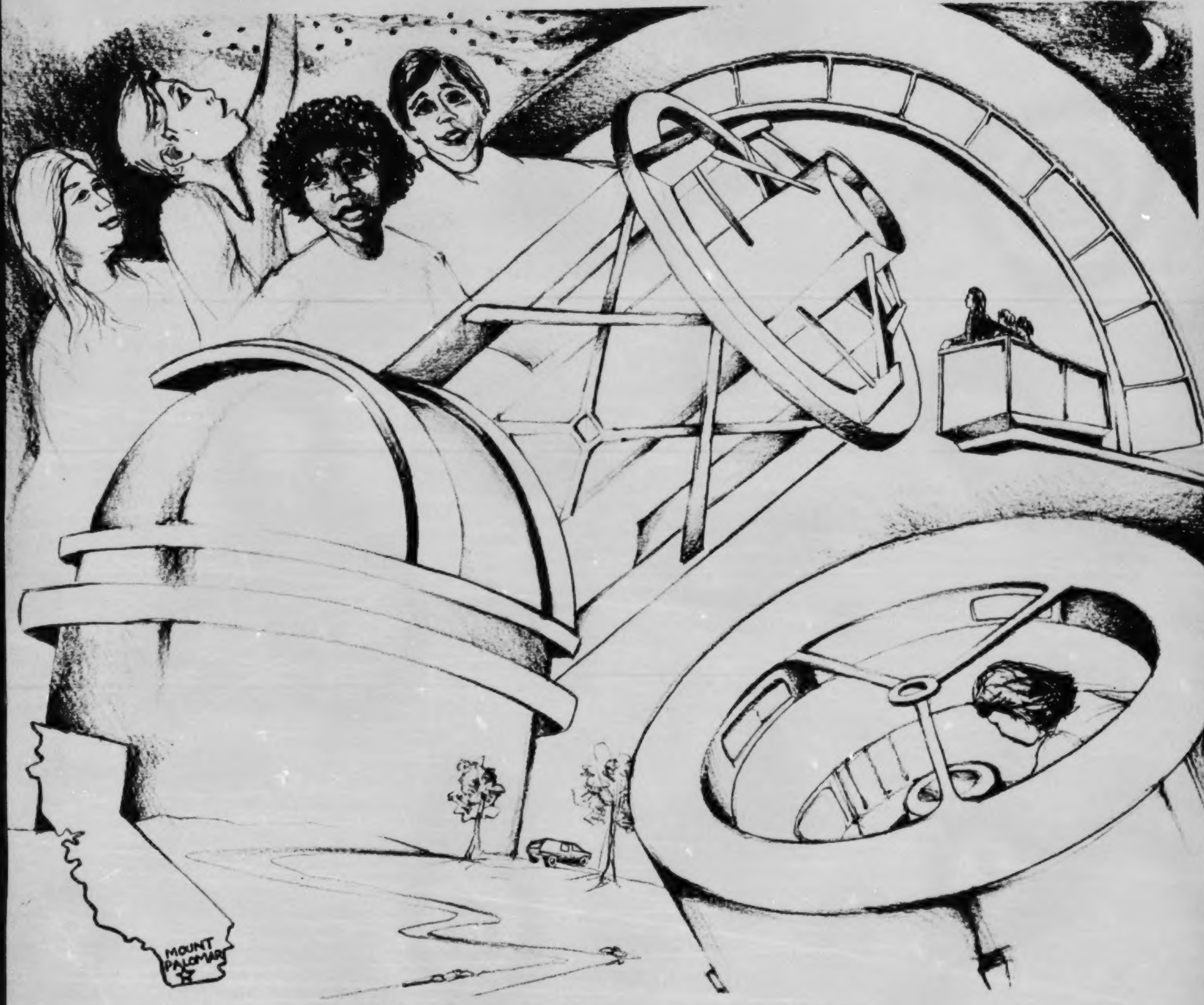
As they filed out, Bobby said, "Let's explore the stars tonight with my binoculars. I have a stand for them. We can look at the moon's craters and at some of the stars in the Big Dipper."

That evening they looked through Bobby's binoculars. They were able to clearly see huge craters on the moon.

They were really surprised when they looked at the Big Dipper. In the pot of the Dipper they saw stars they had not been able to see before. The stars looked like hundreds of glistening and sparkling diamonds. The sky looked as if it were filled with beautiful fireworks.

"Wow, what a sight this is!" exclaimed Les. "I'll never forget it. Now I know why the astronomer at the Hayden Planetarium in New York says that there are more stars in the sky than there are grains of sand on all the beaches of the world."

Project Ideas:


MOUNT PALOMAR

SANTA BARBARA

The long, hot, dusty ride through the Mojave Desert made the children restless. They could not wait to get to Santa Barbara. Jackie, who had never seen an ocean before, except in pictures, was the most eager to get there. Les and Bobby were happy too, since they had seen and swum in the Atlantic Ocean, but had never been to the Pacific Coast of the United States. Ms. Fernandez had suggested Santa Barbara because she had lived there some years before. She remembered the beautifully clean, sandy beaches.

They arrived in Santa Barbara early in the afternoon, with enough time to get into their bathing suits and head for the beach.

As Ms. Fernandez drove them toward the beach, they began to smell a strange odor in the air. As they neared the road leading to the beach, they found a traffic jam in both directions. The police officer directing traffic waved them past the road leading to the beach. What was going on?

Ms. Fernandez stopped the car to ask a passer-by what the problem was. The woman explained that there had been an oil spill and that the beach was covered with oil. Many birds were dead or dying because of this oil spill. She also said that people were pitching in to help clean up the mess. The children were disappointed. They could not go swimming.

Project Ideas:

Chris had an idea. If they couldn't swim, at least they could be of help. Everyone agreed.

Ms. Fernandez drove until she found a parking spot and they all walked down to the beach. They found that straw had been spread on the beach to soak up the oil. Helpless ducks and waterfowl, covered with black oil, were trying to fly. Instead, they were staggering and shivering. Some lay dead on the beach. The group found the person in charge of the cleanup. People had brought old clothes to be used as rags. Storekeepers had donated salad oil and detergent to help clean the birds.

Ms. Fernandez and the children soon pitched in and helped clean up some of the birds. They worked for several hours. The children were ready to leave the beach.

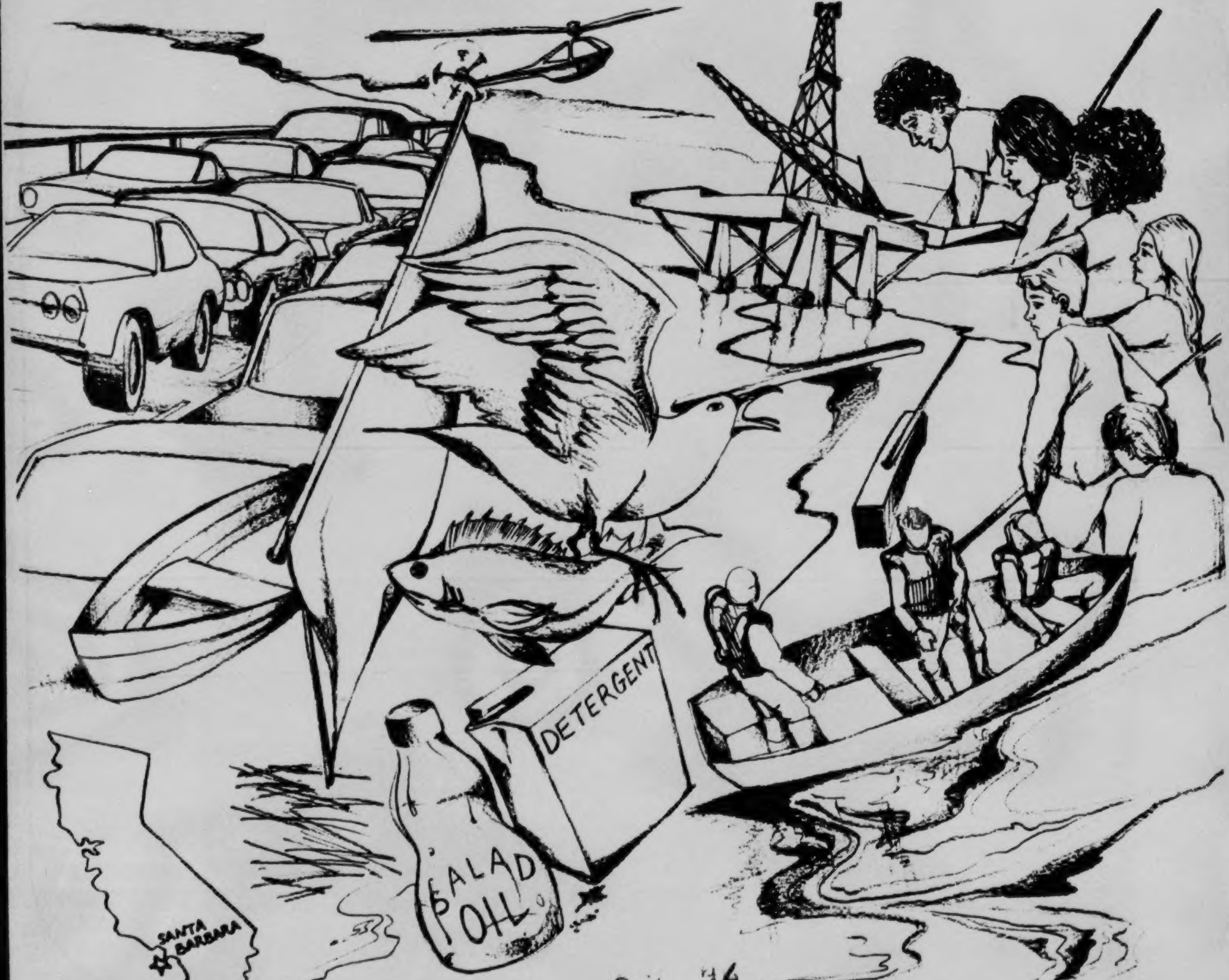
They looked out at the ocean and saw the cause of the problem. It was the oil-drilling rigs. These looked like island towers. Black crude oil was oozing from one of the rigs. In the distance the group could see Coast Guard ships laying out Styrofoam booms to prevent the oil from spreading. Overhead, helicopter pilots were watching the wind and tide and were directing the activities of the Coast Guard ships.

Although the children were really disappointed that they could not swim in the ocean, they were

Project Ideas:

proud that they were able to help save the lives of some birds. Ms. Fernandez told the children that they could not take for granted all the beauty of nature. They would have to work to keep the earth a safe place for all living things.

Project Ideas:


DETERGENT
SALAD OIL
SANTA BARBARA

SALINAS

Everybody piled into the back of an open truck to go to the rodeo in Salinas. The ranch hands and the children were comfortable on the hay in the bed of the truck. One of the ranch hands had a guitar and they sang western songs all the way. Chris loved western songs the best because they were about horses and cattle. They reminded him of his life on the ranch and his love for animals. He was excited because it was his first rodeo and he was eager to see and pet all the animals. Chris happily jumped off the back of the truck and ran towards the entrance gate. He stopped suddenly when he saw the sign that said, "$1.00 for children and $2.50 for adults."

"I don't have $1.00," he thought to himself. "How will I get in?"

The other people came up behind him and stopped too.

"What's wrong, Chris?" Nicky asked. She knew him well and could tell he was upset.

Just then, Ms. Fernandez smiled and said, "Here's everyone's tickets."

Cheering, they rushed through the gate. The large arena was empty. They took their seats and waited for something to happen. At last, the band struck up and people on horses, in beautiful western clothes, carrying flags, marched together into the ring. Everybody cheered!

Project Ideas:

Chris loved the beautiful palominos, with their flowing manes and lively steps. How he wished he could ride one. It would be the answer to his most secret dream. The rodeo events began as soon as the parade of horses left the arena. Chris felt bad for the calves because they were handled so roughly, thrown down and tied up. It was more fun watching the Brahman bulls. When they threw the riders, the clown came out to tease the bulls while the cowhands ran for safety.

Chris didn't like the next event at all. He noticed the spurs on the cowhands' boots, as the cowhands clutched the reins of the bucking broncos. He felt sad about the horses and told the others he would walk around outside to see the animals in their pens.

Chris looked at the different animals. He petted some calves and colts. He gave hay to some cows to eat and a lump of sugar, which he had in his pocket, to a beautiful palimino. Chris stayed around the palominos because they were his favorites.

Just then Chris noticed that one of the colts was loose and was walking away. He grabbed its halter and brought the colt to its owner. The owner was so pleased that she asked Chris what reward he would like.

Project Ideas:

Chris said quickly, "I would love to ride the big palomino."

"Can you ride?" asked the owner.

"Oh, yes! I'm a good rider!" cried Chris.

"Great!" The owner went into the pen and led the palomino out.

Getting a boost up, Chris took the reins in his hands as the owner shortened the stirrups for him.

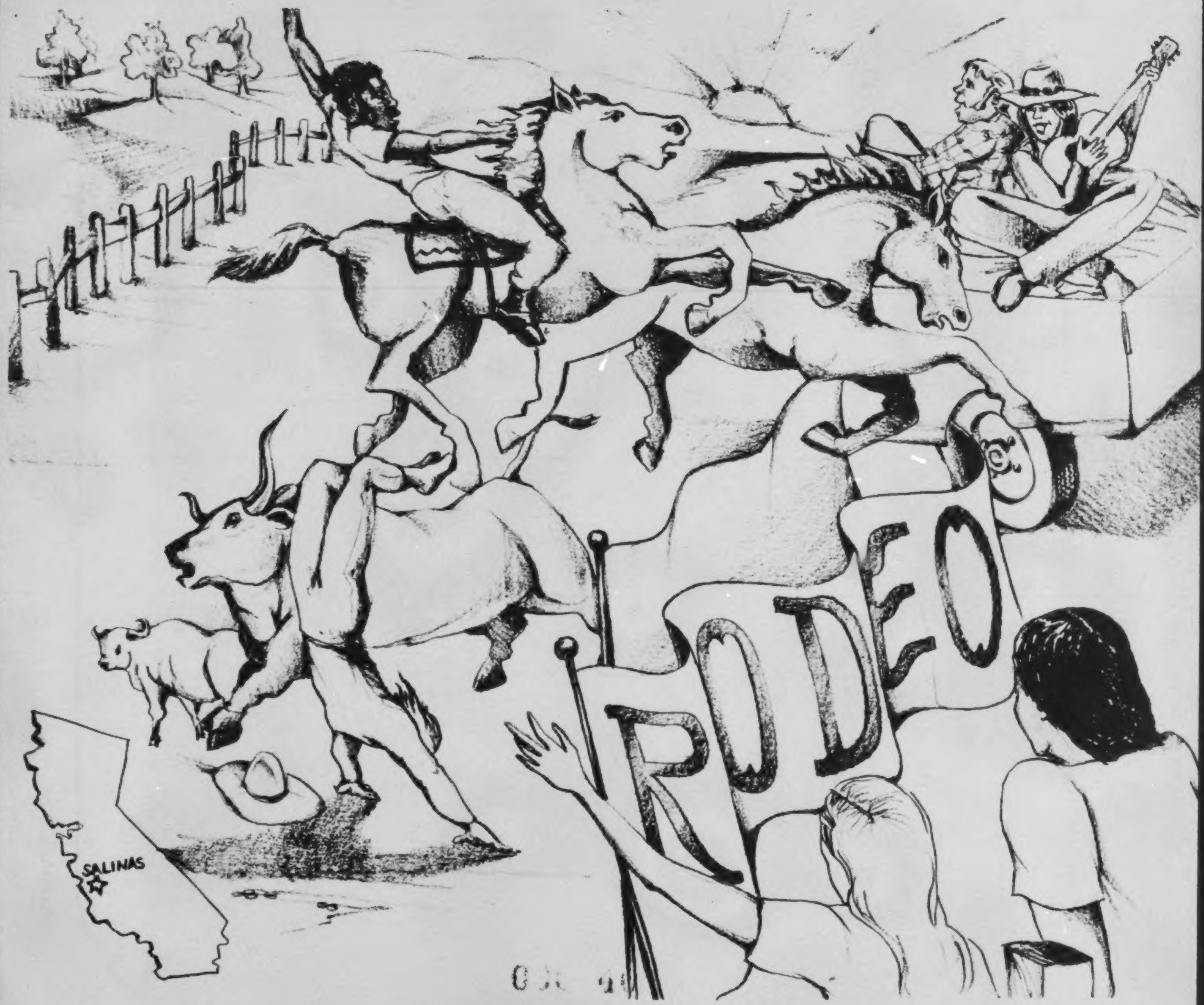
His heart beat fast as he rode the horse all around the animal pens. The horse seemed to love having him on its back and it trotted proudly.

At that moment, Chris heard Bobby shout, "How did you get on that horse?"

Nicky came up with the camera and started taking pictures.

All the kids shouted, "Hurray for Chris!" and the horse took a few little dance steps, threw back its head and neighed. It was the happiest moment of Chris' life.

Project ideas:


RODEO
SALINAS

It was hard to believe that the summer was over. Vacation time was ending and soon the friends would be parting. Nicky was thinking about her new friends. What could she do to make their last day together at the fiesta one they would always remember?

There had been so many exciting moments! She had taken pictures to record them. Now, as she looked through the collection of photos, she recalled the events that had made this a special summer. There was a snapshot of Ronnie at Death Valley, near the place where the van had broken down. Another picture showed Chris on a palomino at the Salinas rodeo. Nicky knew how much it had meant to Chris to ride that horse. It had been a dream come true.

Now Nicky looked at a photo of the Palomar telescope. It was so high in the mountains that the stars seemed much closer. Another photo showed Bobby stargazing with his binoculars. Nicky laughed to herself when she saw the snapshot of Les pumping a handcar. That was the day they had all thought Ms. Fernandez was a ghost. She had scared them silly!

Some of their adventures were not so funny, like the forest fire at Yosemite and the oil-covered birds at Santa Barbara. It really had felt great helping to save those birds. Bobby, the hero of

Project Ideas:

the day at Yosemite, was one of her new buddies.

Poor Jackie had been bitten on the leg by a snake. There was the picture of Jackie in the Mojave Desert, being carried away in a helicopter. Thanks to Les, Jackie was well now and would be at the fiesta with them.

The idea for the fiesta had happened in this way. Ronnie had been reading about the old days in California and suggested having the fiesta--a real old-fashioned Spanish party. Ms. Fernandez agreed because they had missed the one in Santa Barbara. They had been too busy caring for the sick birds to care about a fiesta.

This fiesta was going to be a farewell party. So everyone decided to do something special. Jackie was going to be the announcer and Ronnie decided to perform magic tricks. Bobby and Les were going to gather souvenirs to be put in the pinata that Ms. Fernandez was making. Chris decided to play the guitar and teach everyone some western songs. Only Nicky wouldn't tell anyone what she planned to do. It was to be a surprise--the biggest one of all. It would be something that everyone would love. Of that she was sure.

Project Ideas:

THE FAREWELL FIESTA

Nicky watched the ranch hands as they hung decorations for the fiesta in the big open yard. There were twenty old Spanish lanterns. A large pinata in the shape of a burro hung by a rope from the branch of a tree. It was made of papier-mache and was decorated with many colored dots and designs. Eight long tables covered with lovely paper lace-patterned tablecloths had been set in the yard. In the center of each table was a vase of flowers. Now Ms. Fernandez was helping to set the food on one big table. A ranch hand was preparing a large pot of beans and rice. What a delicious smell there was as he stirred them on the fire!

Friends of Ms. Fernandez were beginning to arrive. They were dressed in costumes. Some wore sombreros, others shawls and colorful skirts and some were in the costumes worn by bullfighters. It was so beautiful! Nicky was busy taking pictures of them all.

The music played while people began talking and singing. Then Jackie welcomed the guests and the entertainment began. Each of the children got up in turn to perform. Ronnie did some tricks with cards and handkerchiefs. Her magic tricks were amazing. Next Chris sang a song in Spanish and played his guitar. All the others joined in and sang along. Snap! Click! Nicky's camera was in action once more.

Project Ideas:

When the program was over, Ms. Fernandez called the children over to the big tree where the pinata hung. Now it was time for the prizes. She put a blindfold on Nicky and gave her the stick. Nicky knew what to do. She took the stick and hit the papier-mache donkey hard, again and again. Out came all the beautiful souvenirs. The children scrambled for the gifts and the other guests laughed.

"They are all for you," said Ms. Fernandez "You can thank Bobby and Les. They want you to remember this fiesta for a long time."

Nicky waited until everyone was quiet and enjoying the food and gifts. Then she said to her friends, "I have a surprise, too! Come, and I will show you what it is."

She took out a large, flat box and gave it to Ms. Fernandez. After Ms. Fernandez opened the box, she said nothing for a moment. Then she showed the children what was inside. Five books of snapshots! On the cover of each were the words SALUDOS AMIGOS. There were the photos of Jackie, Les, Bobby, Chris, and Ronnie, as well as Ms. Fernandez.

"I took more pictures for your last pages," said Nicky.

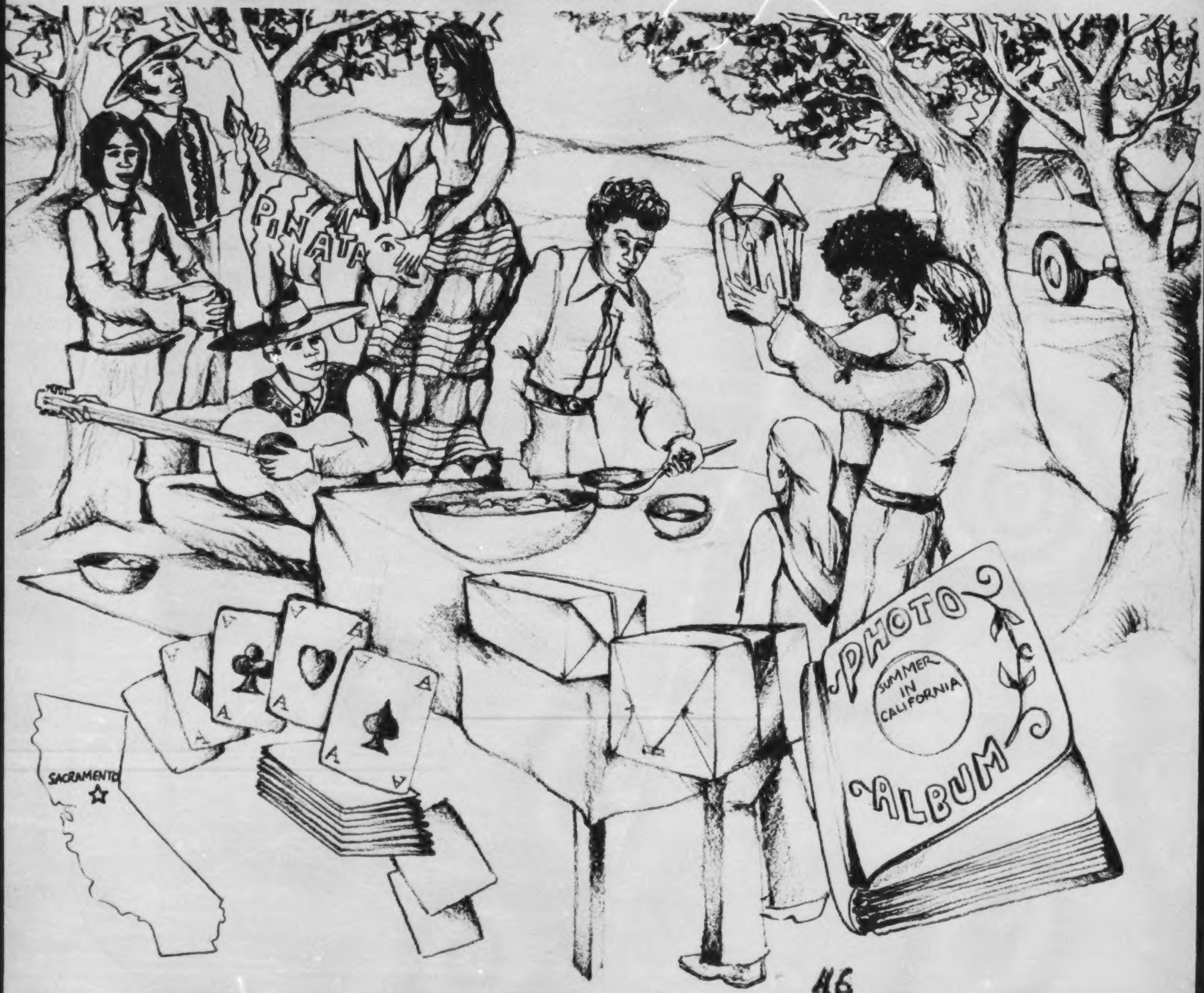
"But there are no pictures of you, Nicky!" said Les.

Project Ideas:

"Oh, but there are," said Ms. Fernandez. "I made sure to get a few pictures, so Nicky will have happy memories, too!"

All of the children smiled as they looked at their albums. Nicky smiled, too. Hers had been a wonderful gift, more wonderful than she had imagined!

Project Ideas:


PIÑATA
SACRAMENTO
PHOTO
SUMMER IN CALIFORNIA
ALBUM

SACRAMENT

Level 2

Level 2 Contents

TIME: Present, Summer

LOCALE: East Coast--colonial and revolutionary America: New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Washington, D.C.

SYNOPSIS: Six eighth-grade pen pals, in their second summer together, visit historical colonial and revolutionary sites in a specially designed van, Probe I

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Project Ideas:

A letter from Nicky:

I absolutely love New York! Even though I'm not a native New Yorker (my hometown is Sacramento, California), I can make that statement from my heart. What convinced me was the time I made my first visit there. This is what happened. Chris and I met Ronnie and Jackie (our Chicago friends) at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago. From there we boarded a plane for New York, which landed ahead of schedule because of a favorable tail wind. The flight was nonstop and scheduled to arrive at 10:55 P.M. We wanted to land later in the evening to avoid the New York City rush-hour traffic.

As our plane approached John F. Kennedy Airport, Jackie, Ronnie, Chris and I were amazed to see the skyline all aglow with tiny rectangles of yellow flickering lights along the horizon. How easy it was to recognize some of the taller landmarks. The Twin Towers of the World Trade Center looked like rectangular giants among the neighboring structures. We could also see the Statue of Liberty. Chris immediately opened his guidebook to the section on the Statue of Liberty and informed us that the statue, including its base, is 305 feet high. We were amazed when he told us that the index finger alone is 8 feet long. We also saw the Empire State Building, stretching 102 stories into the air.

Project Ideas:

Although Jackie and Ronnie had seen the Sears Tower in Chicago, a huge building even taller than the "Twins," they, too, were impressed with these famous landmarks.

We stepped out of the passengers' arrival area and were greeted by Bobby and Les, our two New York chums. They were busy videotaping our arrival. Les said, "O.K., Bobby, this could make a good opening scene."

"Wow, Ronnie" Bobbie exclaimed when he saw her. "You really look super!"

Ronnie was proud. She had been following a healthy food plan to lose weight and was much slimmer than she had been a year ago. After exchanging greetings and comments, we were introduced to the two chaperones, Terry and Gil, who would escort us on our East Coast tour of colonial and revolutionary America. They showed us to the van we would be using for our trip--Probe I. Was it ever an amazing piece of machinery! It really turned me on. The front could be detached from the rear and be used as a "Ground Exploring Module." It was very compact and had many special features. There was a mini-lab in which specimens could be examined and an area for developing film. We were going to be able to have a photographic record of our tour. This was my real interest, since Les and I are photographers. There

Project Ideas:

were lounging chairs, a sound system, equipment for videotaping, and some reference books for research. It looked as though we were in for an incredible adventure.

Project Ideas:

NEW YORK
NEW YORK CITY

An entry from Nicky's diary:

Now, I'd heard that New York was huge, but this trip was an eye-opener. We started on a walking tour of lower Manhattan through the oldest section of the city. Les and Bobby got ready to videotape parts of their town. They knew exactly what they wanted to tape because they had done their planning during the school year. Our tour took us on narrow streets named Wall, Mill, Cherry and Stone. As we walked down these twisting streets, we were told that each name had an interesting story. Wall Street, which had been built in 1653, when New York was still a Dutch colony, once had a wall as a boundary. Stone was the first street to be paved with cobblestones by the Dutch. Mill Street housed a mill, and Cherry Street once ran through a cherry orchard.

We were able to visit the old Federal Hall National Memorial. It stands on the site of Washington's 1789 presidential inauguration. A huge statue of the first President overlooks the area, reminding us that New York City was the first capital of the newborn nation.

From Federal Hall, we went to nearby City Hall. We stood on the spot where the patriots had rallied, in 1776, and shouted the cry of liberty. All of us felt proud to be living in America.

Project Ideas:

Another place of interest was the oldest church building in Manhattan, St. Paul's Chapel, whose original cornerstone was laid in 1764. We saw Fraunces' Tavern, where Washington delivered his farewell address. This place has been restored and now serves as a restaurant as well as a museum. We stopped and had a bite to eat.

Off in the distance during our walking tour we saw a crowd of people looking toward the Brooklyn Bridge. Cameras in hand, we headed in that direction. What an amazing sight met our eyes! Before us, high on a boom, was a camera operator. She was shooting a scene for a movie that was taking place below on the bridge, now cleared of traffic. There were many police officers helping the filmmakers by rerouting traffic and controlling the crowd. I can see why a lot of films are made in New York. Wandering off in another direction, I focused my camera on a scene that was taking place further on. Standing on the southwest corner of Park Row was someone peering through what appeared to be a telescope on a tripod. I sauntered over to her and watched for a moment while she and her partner worked, making signals to each other. Later, as I talked with her, I found that they were surveyors

Project Ideas:

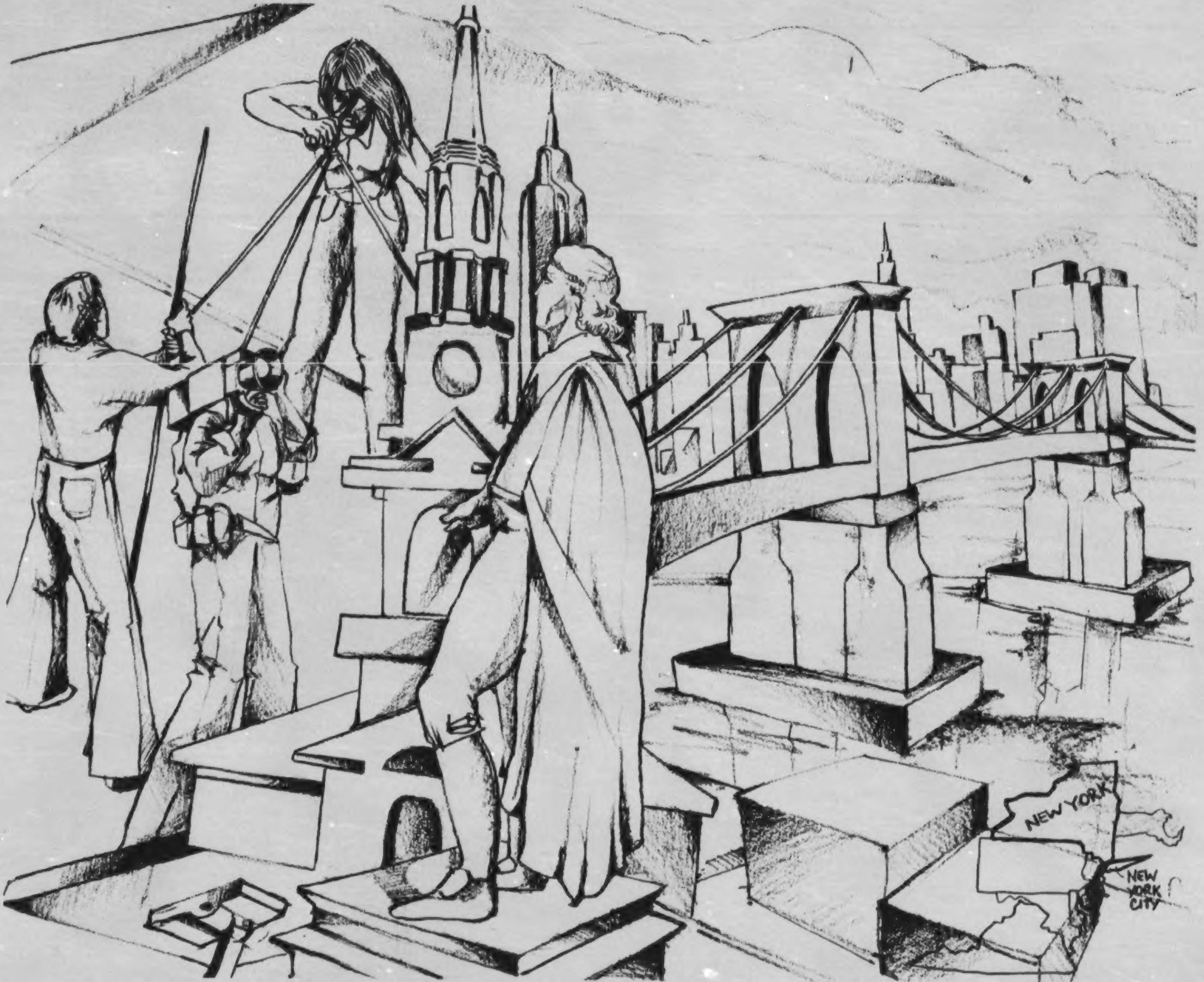
and were mapping parts of the city. The instrument they were using was called a "transit."

It was at this moment that I turned around and headed back toward my group, but they were nowhere to be seen. Here I was, alone in Manhattan, with no real idea of how to get back to the hotel. It was time to gather up my courage and get directions. This was no place to be lost, especially since it was getting late. Luckily, I spotted a group of senior citizens who were taking a tour. They were friendly and directed me to the subway. We talked for a few minutes and they posed for me. I knew that these pictures would be a reminder of a both happy and scary adventure. As we said our good-byes, they pointed the way to the IRT Brooklyn Bridge subway station. Then, with the directions given me by other helpful New Yorkers on the subway train, and by reading the subway map, I was able to reach my hotel in no time. There, I was met by my group. They were amazed that I'd been able to find my way through a strange city. Of course, I knew the reason. New Yorkers were friendly and ready to assist. Anyway, my experience was a good one.

I'd like to come back to New York City and make a film about its history at the end of this century.

We left New York wishing we had more time to see all the other interesting sights.

Project Ideas:


NEW YORK
NEW YORK CITY

The youngsters and their chaperones were in a relaxed mood. They were traveling along the New York Thruway in their mini-van, Probe I. They were going from New York City to Upstate New York. Everyone was talking about the equipment that had been packed into the van. Probe I had camping and fishing equipment, a microscope, materials for developing photographs, binoculars, cameras and the portable videotape system. After a long ride, the group arrived at Saratoga National Historical Park. The youngsters were well acquainted with the area. They had done research on events that had occurred there many years ago.

Ronnie went directly to the Saratoga Battle Monument. It marked the defeat of the British General John Burgoyne. The battle had been led by the Colonial Commanding General Horatio Gates.

As Nicky snapped pictures, she thought to herself, "How would it have been to live through the battle?"

While the guides fired the cannon, Chris thought about the American Revolution. He remembered Molly Pitcher, who bravely fired the cannon after her husband had fainted from exhaustion and heat during the battle. Molly Pitcher was not her real name. It was a nickname given to her by the regiment because she carried pitchers

Project Ideas:

of water to the front line during the battles. Her real name was Mary Hays.

On Fraser Hill, the highest point in the park, they had a panoramic view of the battlefield. Costumed guides explained the events that had occurred there and showed where the battles had raged for almost one full month in 1777.

Later they picnicked on the grounds of the battlefield. Jackie and Ronnie studied a map of the events. They pointed out how Burgoyne had come south from Fort Ticonderoga at the northern part of Lake George and had almost defeated the colonials at Fort Edward.

After videotaping some of the battle scenes and Fort Schuyler, the group headed for Lake George. They retraced the old paths that had been taken by the Colonial army in the war that had given our nation its independence. They talked about the hardships that the soldiers faced. Those brave people had to walk and drag their supplies through the rugged mountains of the Adirondacks. Les and Nicky tried to relive the events, as they shot some pictures of the rolling hills surrounding them. Then they took pictures of the majestic mountains farther away to get a complete setting.

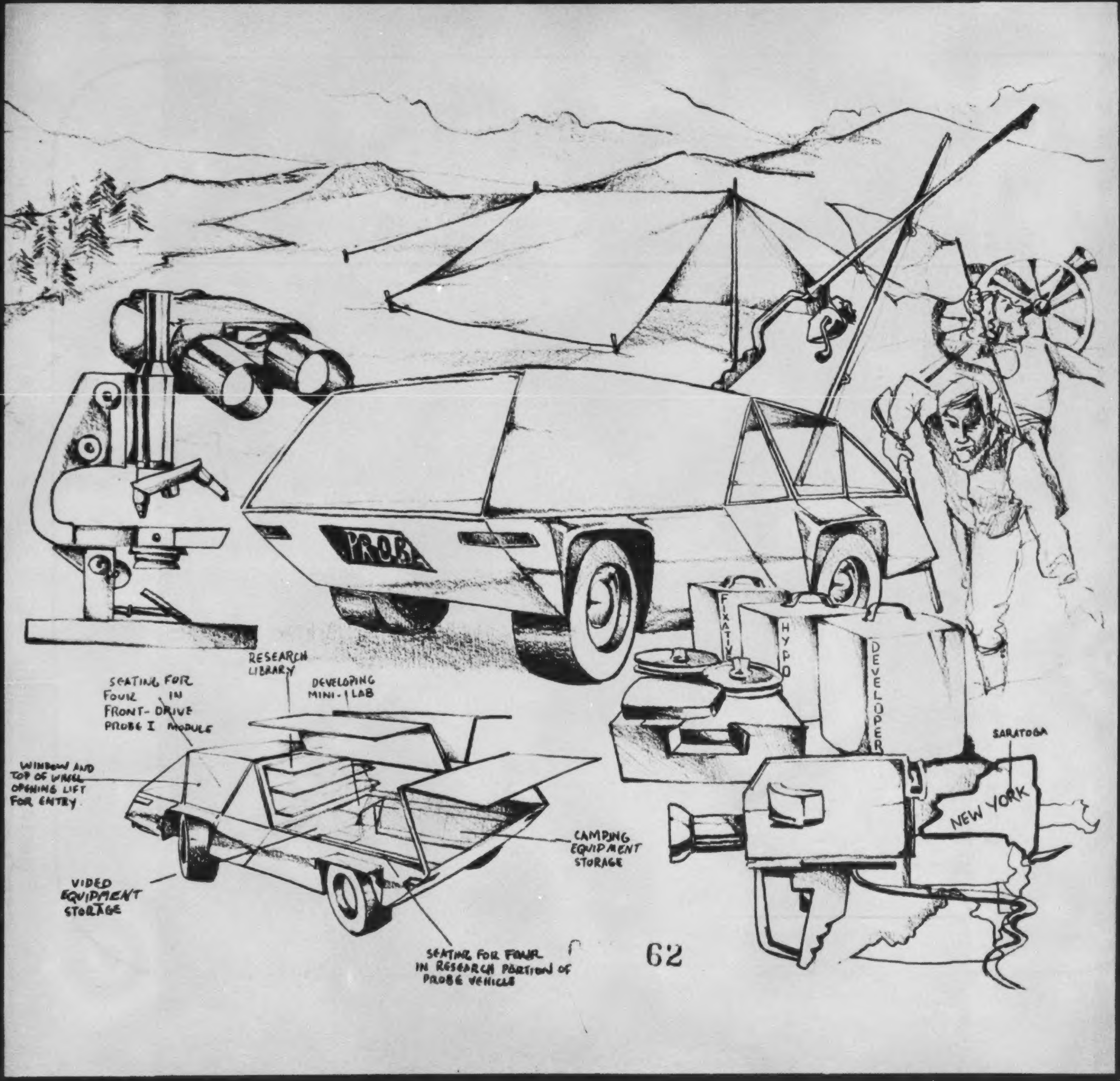
Later, the group arrived at Hearthstone

Project Ideas:

Point State Park. It was a camping area on Lake George. The park was already crowded with campers, but there was still room for the group. The helpful park rangers showed them where they could park Probe I. Nicky and Ronnie set up the campsite and pitched their tents while the others searched for wood for their fire. Arrangements were made to rent a sailboat for their next day's activities.

It was late. It had been a full day of sightseeing and traveling. Everyone was ready for dinner and an early bedtime.

Project Ideas:


PROBE
FIXATIVE
HYPO
DEVELOPER
RESEARCH LIBRARY
SEATING FOR FOUR IN FRONT-DRIVE PROBE I MODULE
DEVELOPING MINI-LAB
WINDOW AND TOP OF WHEEL OPENING LIFT FOR ENTRY
CAMPING EQUIPMENT STORAGE
VIDEO EQUIPMENT STORAGE
SEATING FOR FOUR IN RESEARCH PORTION OF PROBE VEHICLE
SARATOGA
NEW YORK

The Probe I team had planned to arrive at Lake George the next day. Nicky, Jackie and Bobby wanted to go fishing. Terry, one of the chaperones, was to go along with them. They planned to leave at sunrise to try their luck fishing and then to return to pick up the others at ten o'clock. After that, the whole group was to explore the lake. Chris and Ronnie were very interested in doing some scientific studies of the lake, and Les wanted to take photographs.

A sail to Fort Ticonderoga at the other end of the 32-mile lake was also to be squeezed into their busy day. They even planned to swim and picnic on an island.

Nicky, Jackie and Bobby woke up just before dawn and ran to wake Terry. They didn't want to lose any time. A few good fishing spots had been pointed out to them at the boat rental office. After a quick but healthy breakfast, they quietly departed. As they left the campsite, the sun was just rising.

The rest of the group got up later and had a more leisurely breakfast of orange juice, buckwheat pancakes, eggs and hot cocoa. Then they prepared the things they needed for their explorations. Ronnie and Chris got out their glass collecting jars and plankton net to collect specimens of plant and animal life in

Project Ideas:

the lake. They made sure they had the binoculars. Then they carefully packed the picnic coolers with food for lunch and dinner. They were ready for their outing.

Les found the time to develop the roll of film Nicky had taken the day before. After hanging the film to dry, she carefully loaded the camera for Bobby and herself. They had made a pact that they would take turns developing and printing the film. When those who had remained at the campsite were just about ready to leave, a triumphant Nicky, Jackie, Bobby and Terry returned with three 2-pound lake trout. They had already cleaned and prepared the fish for the freezer.

It was still early in the morning as they all boarded the boat. Les and Bobby carefully carried the videotape equipment on board. The air smelled clean and there was an Adirondack chill in the air. White puffy clouds drifted slowly overhead. The sun sparkled on the blue water. The lake looked clean as they pulled away from the dock. At that hour, only a few other boats were out on the Lake. Les and Bobby were eager to use their equipment to videotape the scenic beauty that surrounded them. Since Ronnie already had some experience with boats, it was decided that for a while she would control the tiller. She checked to make sure that everyone was wearing life preservers.

Project Ideas:

The boat set out in a due-north direction. The lake was calm for a while, then suddenly they were hit by some swells. The swells were caused by the lake cruiser, the huge S.S. Ticonderoga, which was loaded with passengers on their way to Fort Ticonderoga. Everyone exchanged greetings by waving hands, as the group's small boat rocked in the wake of the larger boat.

Two other sightseeing boats appeared before long. Chris focused her binoculars on them and reported that their names were the S.S. Mohican and the S.S. Minniehaha. These boats were also packed with sightseers, who were out on shorter trips.

Soon after sailing through the widest part of the lake, they came to an area dotted with islands. Les saw campsites with tents on the islands and thought, "What fun! The campers could only get to their island campsites by boat."

Jackie said, "Let's stop at Glen Island to say hello to the rangers. While we are there, we can get literature and a map of Lake George."

They went to the ranger station on Glen Island, introduced themselves and began to ask

Project Ideas:

the ranger questions about the area. They were all concerned about water pollution and were glad to learn that the lake water in the Lake George region was still pure enough to drink. They were also told how they could reserve an island campsite.

Ronnie said, "Wouldn't it be fun to return here someday and camp on an island?"

Everyone shouted in agreement. After saying good-bye, the group continued on their trip.

Project Ideas:

LAKE GEORGE
NEW YORK

After leaving Glen Island on their journey north to Fort Ticonderoga, the group passed many other islands. Then they came to another wide part of the lake. There were fewer boats and houses on the shoreline in this area.

Chris said, "This must be what the lake looked like during the revolutionary war, and even before, when Native Americans had the area all to themselves."

Nickey said, "I wonder if one of the reference books we have in Probe I has any pictures of the area?"

A seaplane flying overhead made them think that from high above the lake they could really see the lake as it had been hundreds of years ago. The geological changes of nature occur slowly over thousands of years. As Bobby panned the video camera over the scene, Nicky and Chris took notes that would help them write their audio script when they returned home. So far, it had been a terrific day!

When they reached Fort Ticonderoga, they tied up the boat and hired a taxi to take them to the Fort. At the Fort they viewed a display of cannon, firearms, swords, uniforms, powder horns, paintings, Native American artifacts and equipment that had been used during the French and Indian War and the revolutionary war. Les had

Project Ideas:

obtained special permission to record all of this on videotape.

After a guided tour and a cannon firing demonstration, which was also recorded on videotape, the group decided to reenact the defeat of the Colonials under General Arthur St. Clair. He was the general who had been surprised and defeated by General Burgoyne and his British troops.

In order to videotape, Les and Bobby had to climb up to the top of Fort Defiance. They mounted the video camera on a tripod and taped the group as they moved around below in the Fort. They knew that this high camera angle would explain why General Burgoyne had secretly mounted his cannon on this spot in 1777. Now the group could understand why the Colonials had had to leave without a shot being fired. The Colonials were able to defeat General Burgoyne's army at Saratoga only after they were able to regroup.

The next sight to catch their attention was the view from the summit of Mount Defiance. From there, Les and Bobby panned their video camera over the beautiful countryside. The group could see a view of Lake Champlain, the valley and the Green Mountains of Vermont, as well as Fort Ticonderoga. It was quite a sight!

Project Ideas:

Their plans had gone well. It was three o'clock when they returned to the boat. Their 32-mile trip south to their campsite was going so smoothly that they decided to stop at Paradise Bay. In the quiet and beauty of the bay, they swam and enjoyed themselves.

Later Bobby and Nicky cooked dinner over an open fire at one of the picnic sites. Les and Chris cleaned up and washed the dishes when everyone had finished eating.

The group returned the rented boat, picked up Probe I and drove back to their campsite.

There were jars of water samples to be analyzed, film to be developed and printed, videotapes to be viewed and rocks to be studied. All agreed that they were too tired to do everything that night.

The pleasant events of the day were reviewed as they sat around the campfire. Les and Bobby were complimented by their friends for the mature way in which they had worked together. They had done a great job of recording the events of the day. Nicky played the guitar while everyone sang favorite songs.

Although no words were spoken, they all had a special feeling of friendship and team spirit as they carefully put out their campfire and went to bed.

Project Ideas:

TICONDEROGA
NEW YORK

The group sat around the campfire at the Lake George campgrounds talking about their trip experiences. Chris said, "In the early colonial days, there were very few settlers in this area. The Mohawks had it all to themselves. They lived here in harmony with nature. It's hard to imagine the land as it was then! There were just animal trails and the paths made by the tribal people."

Everybody's interest was sparked by Chris' vivid picture of those days. Jackie, excited by Chris' thought, added, "Yes, Mohawk people used this area to hunt, fish and farm. They were members of the Iroquois Confederacy. You know, they met together in the longhouse to govern themselves.

"Long before the settlers from across the Atlantic came here, the Iroquois lived in the central part of New York state, and north into Canada. That's the area from the Hudson River on the east all the way to Lake Erie on the west." Jackie threw his arms out to express the wide stretch of land.

Les and Bobby, both New Yorkers, were amazed. Les said, "I don't know anything about the history of New York native peoples, and I'm a native New Yorker!"

Then Nicky asked, "How do you know so

Project Ideas:

much about the Iroquois, Jackie?"

"Well," answered Jackie, "I didn't have a chance to tell you before, but this might be a good time. After we got together last year, I felt I wanted to have another pen pal back east. I picked a name from a list. It turned out that my pen pal is a Native American. He lives with his family on the Cattaraugus Reservation near Gowanda."

Bobby ran to Probe I and pulled out a map. "Here it is--about 35 miles south of Buffalo."

Les said, "Do you think we could drive out there to meet your friend?"

The group agreed that it would be fun to go. "Let's go!" "Let's go!" "Yeah, let's go!" they shouted together, as they danced around. They were excited at the thought of visiting a reservation and meeting Native Americans.

Jackie ran off to phone his pen pal. The phone was at the ranger's station about a half-mile away. While he was gone, the group talked about what it might be like to visit the Indian reservation.

As Jackie came running back, they heard him shouting happily, "It's okay! We can go. We can go!"

After Jackie had calmed down, he told the group

Project Ideas:

that his pen pal, Donald Sundown, would be happy to have them visit.

The next day, as they drove into the Cattaraugus Reservation, they began to realize that there was little difference between the homes here and those that they had passed during their drive.

When they rang the bell at the door of Donald Sundown, the Iroquois graciously shook hands with them and invited them into his home. He was wearing jeans and a T-shirt, just as they were. The group was glad to meet this new friend. Donald introduced them to his family, who warmly greeted Jackie and his "troop," and invited them to dinner. Donald's family agreed to have this quiet, pleasant evening videotaped.

The meal that evening was delicious. The soup was made from homegrown corn and kidney beans and salt pork. The corn bread was a dried bread that had been made from steamed cornmeal.

As they ate dinner, they learned a great deal from the Sundowns. The fact that 28,000 Native Americans still lived in New York state was amazing to them. Before meeting the Sundowns, they all held very stereotyped views of Indians--that they lived only out west in tepees or adobe apartment houses. Bobby and Les were also thrilled

Project Ideas:

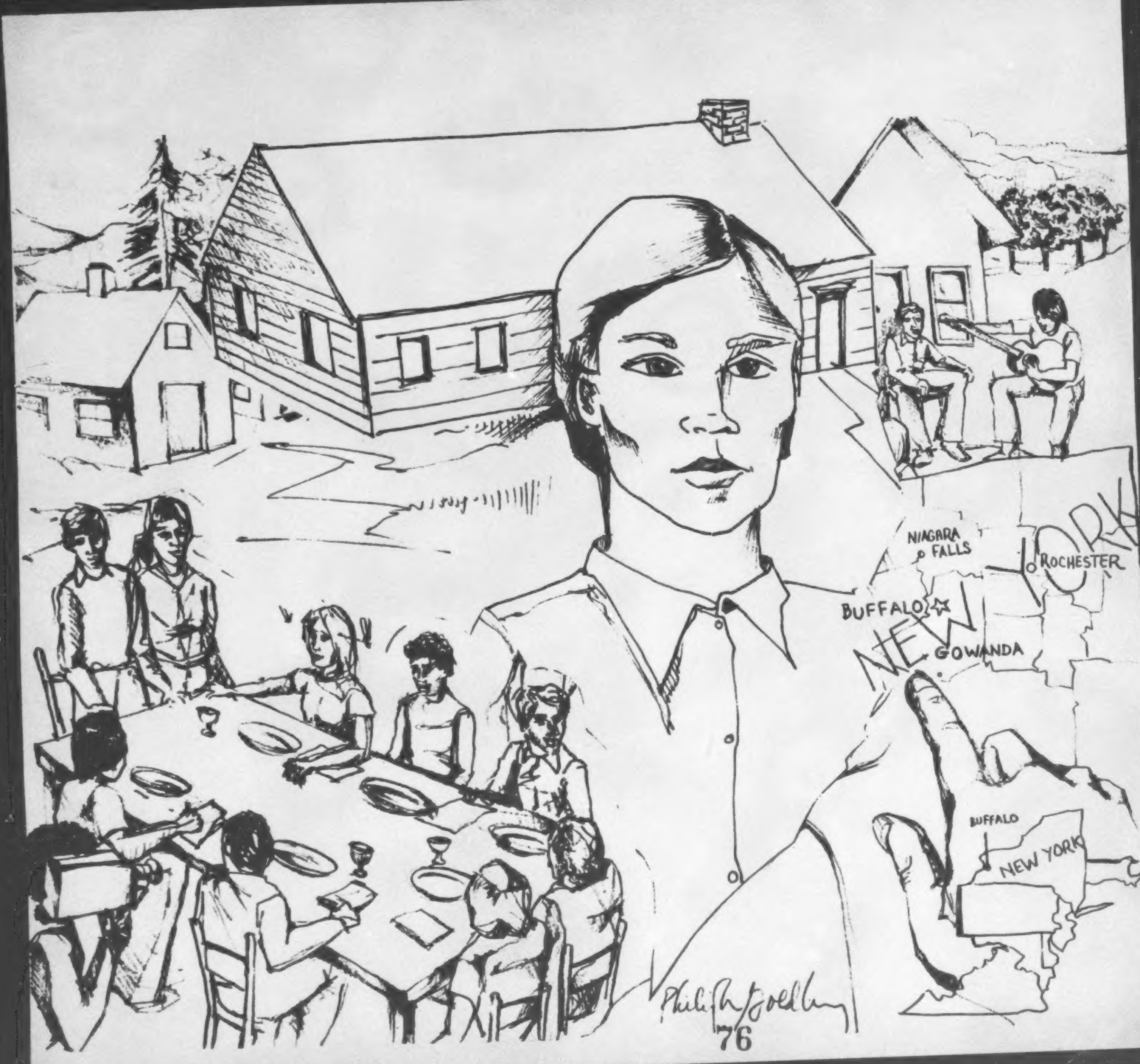
to find out that many members of the Iriquois Nations lived in New York City.

Nedra Sundown, Donald's sister, told them that the property of the reservation belonged to their nation, rather than to different families. The property was taken care of by a group of royaners, or chiefs, who were appointed by the clan mothers of the tribes.

Ronnie, Jackie and Chris were taught an Iroquois social dance. Les and Bobby videotaped the action. Nicky played the guitar, and everyone had fun singing.

The evening ended on a note of joy and good feelings for all.

Project Ideas:


NIAGARA FALLS
ROCHESTER
NEW YORK
BUFFALO
GOWANDA
BUFFALO
NEW YORK

BOSTON ADVENTURE

Boston! They were on their way at last. Ronnie could hardly wait to get there. Ever since she had read about early colonial Boston she'd wanted to visit. Now, through a stroke of good fortune, she was going to have a chance to see the places she had heard of and read about in books.

It was raining as Probe I headed along U.S. 90 East. As a matter of fact, it had been raining all of the time they had been on the road from western New York state. The group had just come from the Indian Reservation at Cattaraugus. What a delightful trip that had been!

Nicky had already developed some contact sheets and was at this moment selecting some shots for final prints.

"How wonderful it is to have such useful equipment in the probe!" Ronnie thought. The darkroom was great, and really convenient. So was the mini-lab, where Chris and she had examined and labeled specimens collected along the way.

Just a few small problems had cropped up since their start. Probe I had not worked exactly as they hoped. It had stalled and sputtered at one point and for a while they thought they'd have to delay their trip. As

Project Ideas:

for the mini-lab, even though they loved it, they sometimes felt cramped for space.

Otherwise, everything else was fine and the minor problems could be corrected.

The steady droning of the van's wheels caused Ronnie to become sleepy. The bleak, gray skies; the wet, black surface of the road; and the constant pattering of raindrops on the roof of the van all added to her drowsiness. In the distance, she could see the buildings of the city of Boston.

Boston was an old city, but what Ronnie thought marvelous, as the van approached the city, was the sight of many old, historic buildings next to ultra-modern structures. Excitement shone in her eyes, and she could tell that her companions were just as happy.

The next day, very early, they were on the walking tour along Boston's Freedom Trail. How thrilling it all seemed to Ronnie--like stepping through a time machine! It seemed unbelievable, but there they were, atop Breed's Hill, site of the famous Battle of Bunker Hill, which had taken place on June 17, 1775. Ronnie pictured herself as a Colonial soldier surrounded by the British Redcoats. She bravely stood ready to fire her musket when she saw "the whites of their eyes."

Project Ideas:

The group next visited Faneuil Hall, an old building constructed in 1742 that had been converted into a marketplace. They roamed through the shops on the lower floor, and later walked through nearby Quincy Market. There they shopped, ate lunch, and prepared for the next part of their walk.

Ronnie marveled when she saw the Old North Church with its high pews and mighty pulpit.

The group boarded a ship called the "Brig Beaver II." It was really a museum made to look like one of the original British ships that had stood in the harbor the night of the Boston Tea Party. The group was allowed to throw the make-believe cargo of tea overboard.

"Oh, to have been there!" Ronnie thought. She imagined herself standing aboard the ship that night, hiding in the shadows. There she was, wearing dark knee breeches that buckled around white stockings. She also had on a white ruffled shirt, a waistcoat and a pair of buckled shoes. Suddenly, Ronnie heard a muffled sound. All around her, she could see men--about 50 or 60 of them--with painted faces. They were carrying war clubs and hatchets. They must have come out to the big ship in rowboats. One by one, they emptied some large chests of tea into the water. Who were these men? Ronnie

Project Ideas:

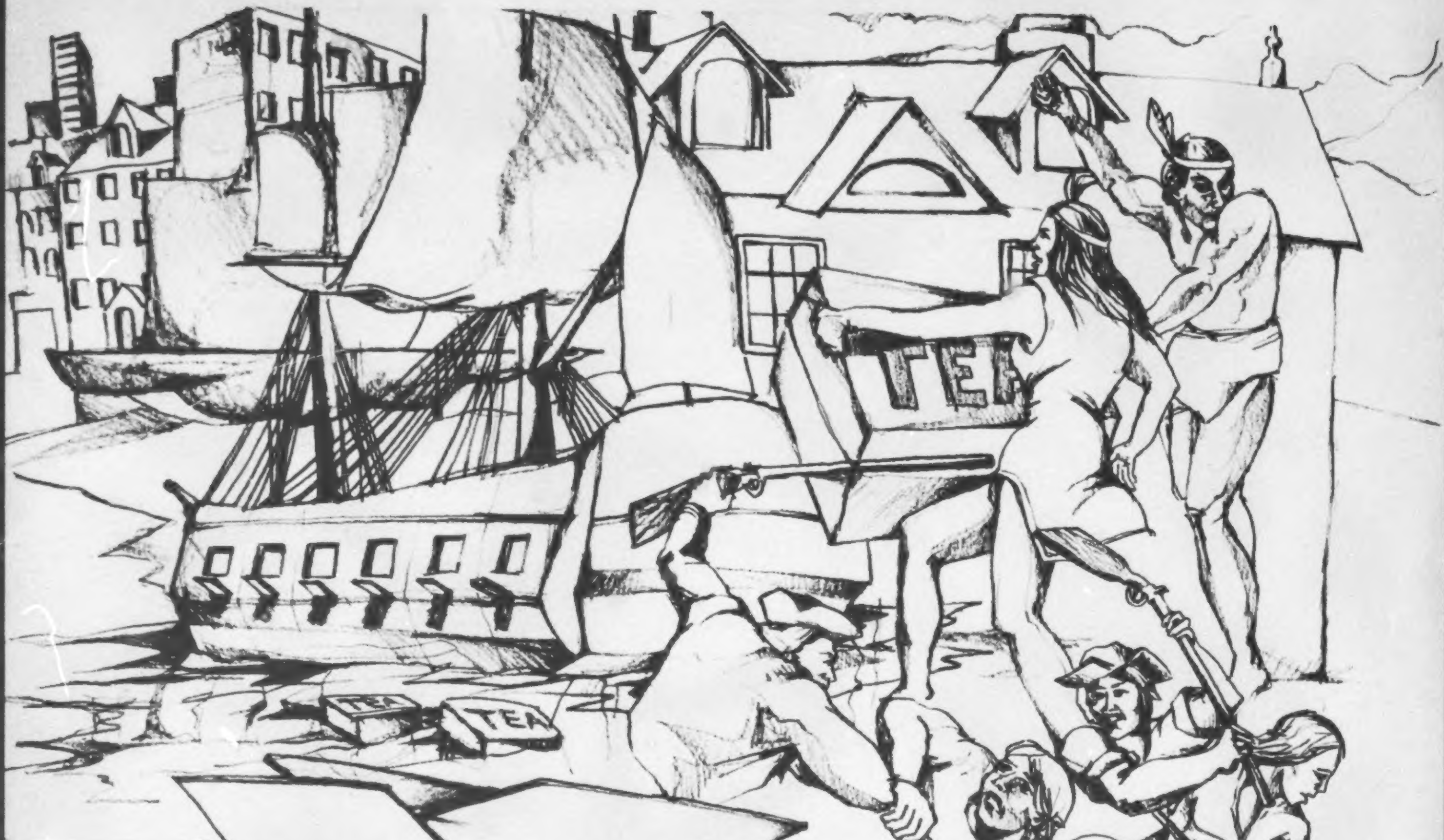
suspected that they were famous leaders of the Revolution. What an exciting night it was!

Ronnie's mind snapped back to reality. She was standing with her friends on shore. They, too, seemed to have been thinking about exciting moments of the past, for someone suggested that they do a reenactment of the Boston Tea Party. Les said it could easily be done during the coming school year. Everyone agreed.

As they headed back toward Probe I, they discussed how they would prepare for the videotaping of the reenactment.

Settled in the van, Ronnie sat back in her chair and sighed to herself. Boston was everything she had hoped--and more!

Project Ideas:


TEA
TEA
TEA
BOSTON
MASSACHUSETTS

After their experiences in Boston, the group wanted to see other revolutionary war historical places. They planned a journey south, to see where George Washington had crossed the Delaware River and to see Valley Forge and Philadelphia. Those were all important sites in the story of the founding of our nation.

Probe I followed a southerly route. It was similar to the route that Washington and his brave soldiers had followed. The British had forced them to retreat from New York City during the winter of 1776.

They arrived at the spot in New Jersey where Washington had crossed the Delaware. Chris gathered pictures from the guidebooks that he planned to later use in the videotape to show how George Washington had crossed the ice choked river.

Chris said, "It must have been difficult to carry cannons and other heavy war materials across the river. They later had to drag all their equipment overland to Trenton. It was there that the Colonials were able to surprise and capture the Hessian Mercenaries."

They boarded Probe I. Then they crossed the Delaware River Bridge and proceeded into Pennsylvania on their way to Valley Forge.

Jackie reminded everyone that the winter of 1777 had been a cold and bleak time for the

Project Ideas:

troops at Valley Forge.

When they arrived there, they all decided to pretend that they had been with the Continental army at that time, which was a difficult thing to do because it was a warm day. They lay down on the ground and tried to imagine how Washington's soldiers had slept in the frost and snow without warm clothes and blankets.

They realized even more how brave the Continental army had been. While standing there, the group felt history coming to life again.

Jackie said, "Many of the Colonials had no shoes. Many became sick and died here. Many others gave up and went home. In spite of the problems, the spirit of the Colonial troops led them to victory.

They began to plan how they would reenact all this for their videotape project when they returned home. Les and Bobby took some shots of the surrounding area for background.

Next they wanted to see where the Declaration of Independence had been adopted on July 4, 1776. They also wanted to see where the Liberty Bell had so joyously been sounded to tell the world that the Continental Congress had convened.

They finished their scripts and taping, loaded the van and were on their way to Philadelphia.

Project Ideas:

They rode along in Probe I to the Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia.

Ronnie said, looking at her notes for the audio script, "The Declaration of Independence was signed there. It gave the American Revolutionaries direction and purpose. It talks about the individual freedoms we have now. It says that a government must be given permission by its people to do its work. It also states that the government should be fair to all. All its citizens are to be free and equal."

Les said, "Yes, but at that time women and slaves were not considered citizens."

When they arrived in Philadelphia, a change came over the group. They knew that here, in this city, were many symbols of the birth of our nation. Les panned the video camera across the serious expressions on the group's faces as they stood before the Liberty Bell. She zoomed in for a close-up of the bell that had rung out for liberty. The group imagined how the early Americans had celebrated as they heard it peal on July 4, 1776, when the Declaration of Independence had been adopted.

The Liberty Bell had proclaimed America's freedom. They read on a plaque nearby that it had been rung

Project Ideas:

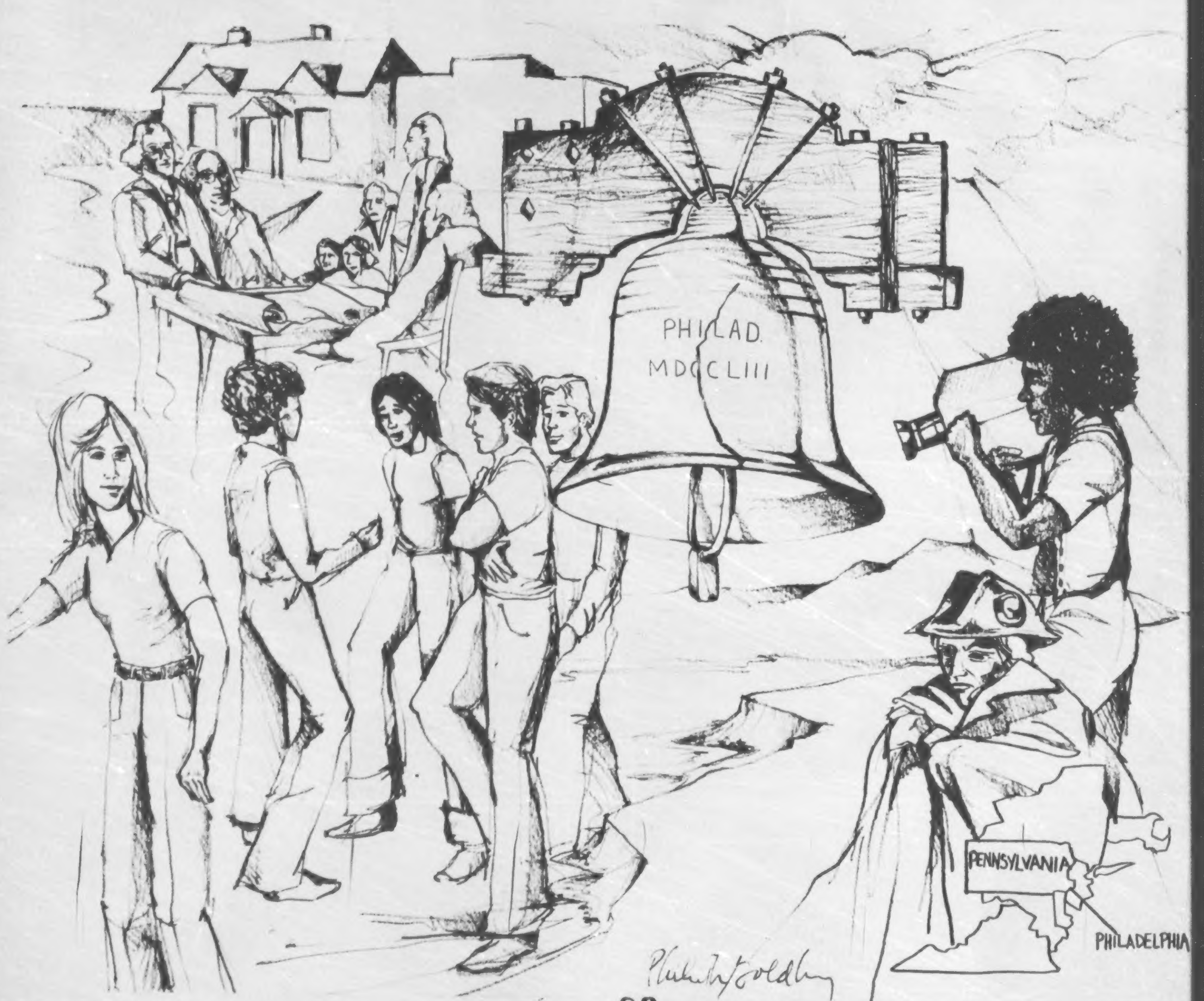
on many other occasions, such as at the convening of the Continental Congress, at the end of the revolutionary war, and also at the deaths of George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson. The placque also stated that the bell was no longer sounded, because it had cracked in 1835 when it tolled for the death of John Marshall, the last of the great revolutionary patriots. It stands in Independence Hall now, a symbol of our liberty, as important to us as our flag. The bell did its job well. It now stands silent, for all to proudly visit and see.

Les ended this sequence of videotape by backing out with a close-up of the crack in the bell. In the stillness of the room, the youngsters imagined themselves as having been with George Washington at that time. They wondered, "How different would our lives have been then? How long would it have taken at that time to make this trip we just completed?"

They were very proud, and they all agreed among themselves that it would have been great to take part in the forming and creating of the new United States of America.

The group prepared to leave Pennsylvania and drive to Williamsburg, Virginia. They passed through Maryland on the way.

Project Ideas:


PHILAD.
MDCCLIII
PENNSYLVANIA
PHILADELPHIA

From Bobby's log:

Whenever I think of Williamsburg, Virginia, I always recall the smell of old wood in the night air, the sound of hoofbeats on cobblestones, the smell of fragrant blossoms, the sight of candlelight, and the taste of peanut soup. That's what I remember best during our visit there.

We had just arrived in Probe I when a costumed guide greeted us. We were special guests because we were videotaping our trip, and a guided tour had been planned for us. Two horse-drawn carriages were waiting for us. Chris and Nicky were happy to see such beautiful animals. They petted them and told the guide that they had horses of their own.

Chris asked, "Can I drive the carriage? I often drive our wagon at home."

Nicky, not to be outdone by Chris, managed to get to drive the other carriage.

Soon we were on our way up the Duke of Gloucester Street, headed toward the Governor's Palace. Nicky and Chris were holding the reins with the guides sitting next to them. That stately building, we were told, once was the home of Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson, two famous American patriots. Each had served as governor of colonial Virginia and both had designed the beautiful gardens.

Project Ideas:

The town looked as though time had stood still. No wonder! The houses were just as they had been in colonial days! We were told that many of the eighteenth-century homes were now rented and maintained by the people who live in them. As we drove by a few homes, we could see some of the furnishings through the ground-floor windows. Our guides informed us that the shades were purposely raised so that visitors could see into the restored rooms.

We stopped at shops where costumed workers, who were experts in the crafts, demonstrated their skills. Les and I especially enjoyed videotaping the people as they worked at their particular craft. The action was all there for us. All we really had to do was aim and focus the camera. Jackie and Ronnie recorded the sounds and interviews of the workers with the audio tape recorder.

One highlight of our tour was the blacksmith's shop. Here we met the master blacksmith, who hammered a mass of hot iron on an anvil. Behind him, on a brick wall, were some of the tools he used. Next, we walked to the candlemaker's shop. We videotaped the huge, circular spoked rack that held hundreds of olive-green and yellow candles. We thought it was an unusual sight. At a fireplace

Project Ideas:

was a candlemaker dipping more candles into a black kettle filled with tallow.

At the weaver's and spinner's craft shop, a spinner showed us how linen was spun from flax. I tried my hand at spinning, with the permission of the spinner. This was good action for the videotape.

Chris and Nicky were still at the reins of the carriages when we drove past some neighboring gardens with our guides. From a distance, we could hear the sounds of fife-and-drum music. We drove toward Market Square. There we saw a re-enactment of the colonial militia going through their drills. They wore three-cornered hats with upturned brims, pants of assorted colors, white stockings, and shirts, and they had straps crossed over their shoulders. The sounds of the fifes and drums and of the booming cannon as the militia marched by sent a surge of pride through me. I could tell that my friends were as excited as I was by this display of past history. Nicky let the reins go, so that she could stand up and see better.

At that moment, a cannon fired and startled the horse. It bolted, and away went the carriage, people and all. As we were all shouting in alarm, Nicky calmly picked up the reins and in a few minutes had the horse under control. Even the guide had not been as alert

Project Ideas:

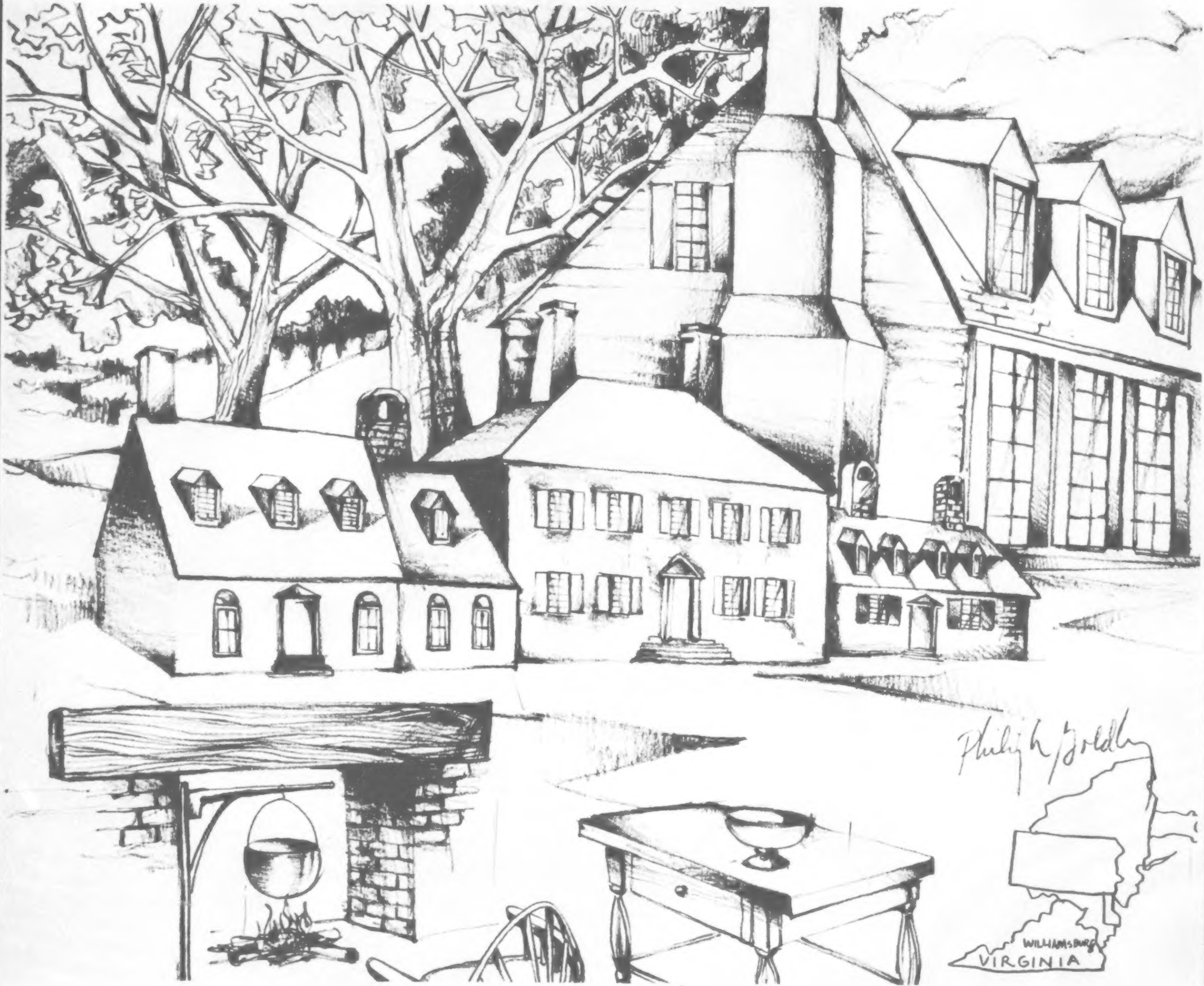
as Nicky! It was terrific action and Les got it all on tape.

Later that afternoon, after we'd calmed down, we were guests at one of the famous colonial restaurants, where, to my delight, I tasted peanut soup. I just loved it. It was an old colonial favorite.

As evening approached, we wandered through the streets of Williamsburg. I sniffed the fragrant air and smelled the trees and blossoms. How odd it seemed to be away from the noise of traffic! As a last stop, we visited the music teacher's house. There we sat in the torch-lit garden and listened to music played on a harpsichord. The selections were from colonial tunes.

After that, we returned to our hotel. We were too excited to sleep, so we planned our visit to Washington, D.C. We also talked about the day and how Nicky had saved the carriage. What an extraordinary visit that Williamsburg trip was!

Project Ideas:


WILLIAMSBURG
VIRGINIA

As the last stop on their tour of colonial and revolutionary America, the group was to visit Washington, D.C. They were still excited from their visit to Williamsburg, Virginia. As they talked about the trip, Les suddenly made an announcement.

"Guess what?" she asked.

Curious eyes turned in her direction.

"I waited until now to tell you this news. We are all to be congressional guests of the New York delegation. We'll be given a special tour of Washington, D.C."

"Wow! How did that happen?" Everyone wanted to hear the details.

"If you remember," continued Les, "last year I won an essay contest entitled 'Education in the Inner City.' I was awarded a trip to Washington, D.C., as a prize. When I mentioned that our group planned to visit there, you were all invited to join me."

The other youngsters beamed with pleasure as Probe I moved along U.S. 95 south toward their destination. Since the distance from Williamsburg to Washington is only 115 miles, they arrived in just over two hours.

As soon as the van pulled in front of the Capitol, they were met by two members of the New York delegation who were to be their guides around Washington. The tour began soon after

Project Ideas:

their arrival. Les pointed out that Washington was the third capital of the newly founded nation. It covered more than 68 square miles, or 176 square kilometers.

The first stop was the Capitol--a beautiful stately, domed building with both a Senate and a House wing. The youngsters toured several chambers, including the President's Room. There they marveled at the handsome green-topped mahogany table, over which hung a gorgeous crystal chandelier. Many historical bills had been signed in that very room, they were told. They viewed the statues of famous men and women in Statuary Hall and spoke with some congressional representatives who were at work in their offices. They peeked into the Rayburn Room, which is a reception hall for guests of members of the House of Representatives. They remarked on the beauty of the wood paneling that decorated the room. It was here that they were to be guests later on that day.

Next on their tour was a visit to the White House, the 100-room, 3-story mansion that serves as the President's home. The flag was flying, so they knew he was at home. As they approached the entrance, they glimpsed a helicopter that was about to take off from the front lawn. A passenger aboard waved to them, as did the pilot.

Project Ideas:

How amazed they were to discover that the passenger was none other than the President, off to Camp David!

They saw the Oval Office and several other areas of the White House. Then they went over to the Lincoln Memorial and sat on the steps, which looked out over two rectangular pools of water. If their lengths were combined, these two pools extend 2,292 feet. From this spot the group could see the Capitol and the Washington Monument directly across from them.

"Let's go fishing," said Nicky, jokingly.

"What do you think we could catch?" added Bobby.

They all chuckled.

"Oh, stop your kidding," said Ronnie. "This place has a great history! Just look at those high buildings! Can't you feel the power! Here our government is in action."

They all laughed at her seriousness, but they stopped and thought for a moment.

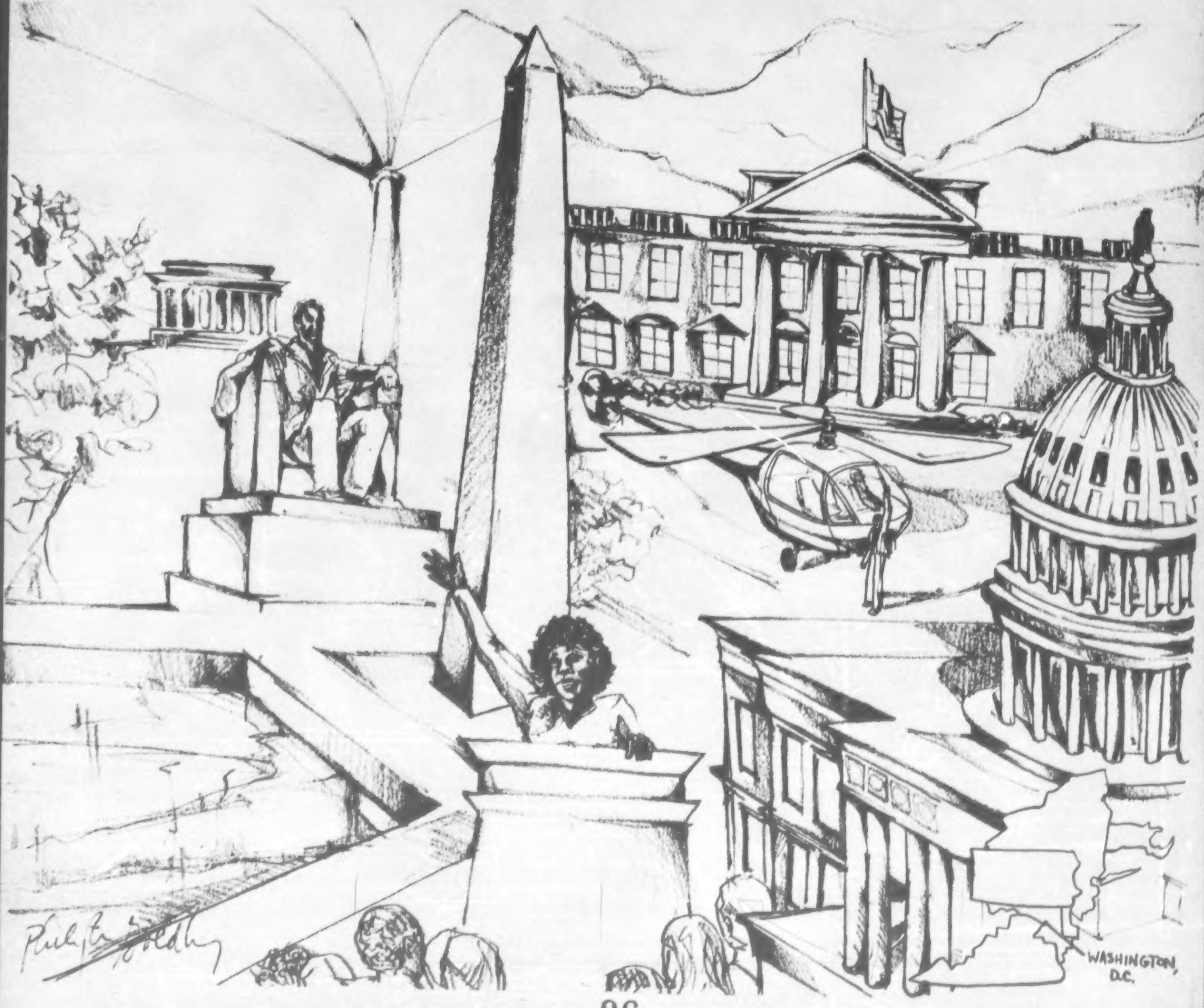
Toward evening, after freshening up, the youngsters met in the Rayburn Room for a buffet dinner in their honor. After they met the other guests, chatted for a while and ate, Les was formally announced. She stepped forward, and after greeting the hosts and other guests,

Project Ideas:

spoke these words:

"You adults represent the present; my friends represent the future. We of the future are fortunate, for we have many more ways of learning and obtaining an education. We have technology, which can greatly assist us if we use it wisely. We have good minds, but we also have computers to help solve the great problems of our day. Our faster means of travel, exploring the world and the solar system, help us to understand more about our world and universe. Yet we must learn to maintain the healthy state of our own earth and its resources. This trip in itself has been an educational experience. My friends and I have learned the importance of teamwork in solving problems. We have learned to think things through together, and to share ideas as well as living spaces. As a group, we have accomplished much, even in a short time. I believe we have grown through this wonderful experience. I thank you all for helping to make it possible!"

Project Ideas:


WASHINGTON, D.C.

Level 3

Level 3 Contents

TIME: Present, Summer

LOCALE: Colorado, South Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, Washington

SYNOPSIS: In their third summer together, the six friends, now graduated from the ninth grade, travel through six states and visit five in a highly sophisticated, scientific modular vehicle, Probe II

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Project Ideas:

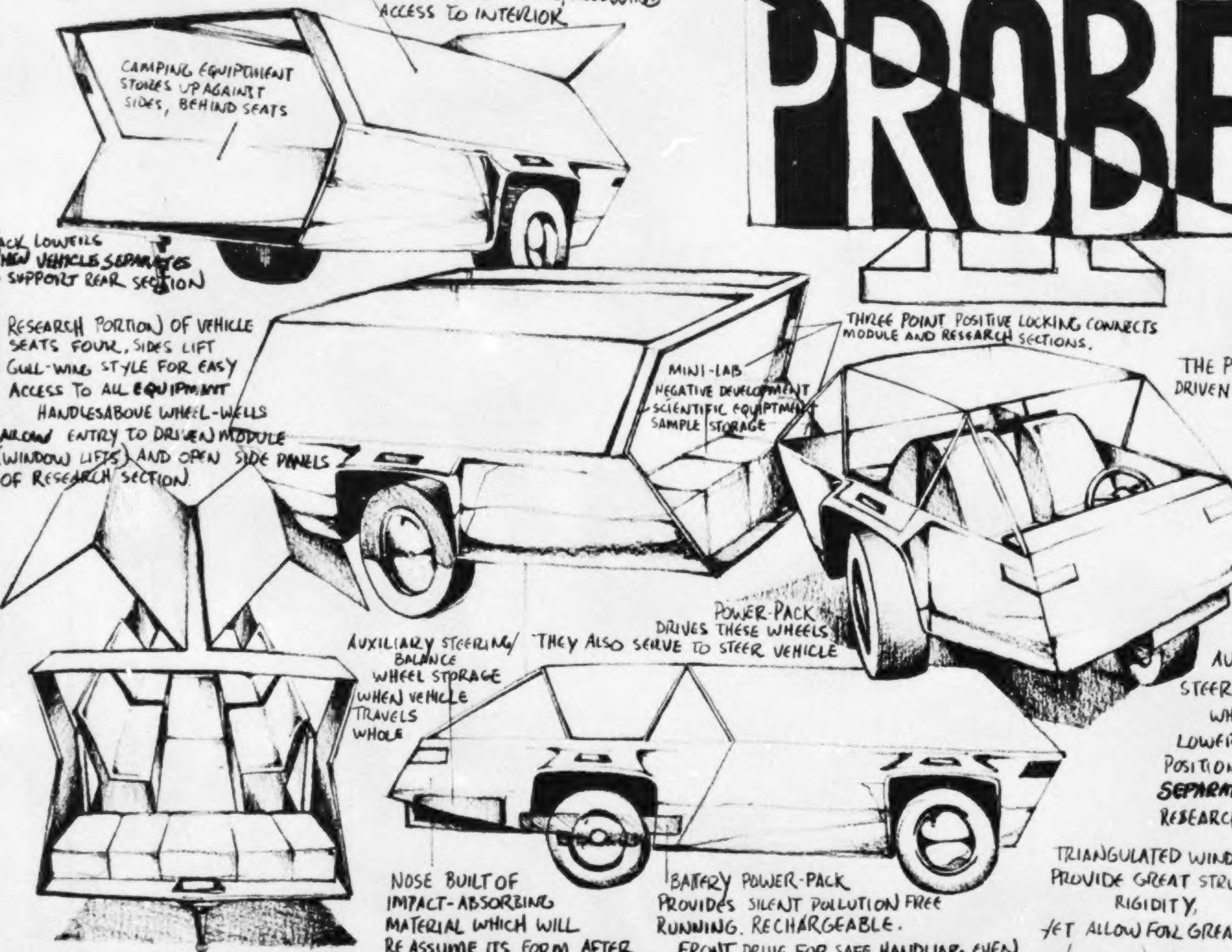
Throughout the year, the six friends kept in touch with one another. They planned and looked forward to their next summer vacation. Two years ago, they had visited places like Yosemite National Park, the Mojave Desert, Death Valley, Palomar, Santa Barbara and Sacramento, the capital of California. Last year, their mini-van, Probe I, had taken them to many of the historical sites on the East Coast; they had visited many of the areas connected with colonial and revolutionary times. Although their past vacation experiences had been varied, this year's vacation was going to be a special one.

During the winter, Ronnie and Jackie helped to design an updated model of last year's Probe I. The new vehicle was equipped with a new modular portion, detachable and used independently for exploration. All the defects of Probe I that had frustrated them last year were eliminated or corrected. In addition, the vehicle was equipped with an updated mini-lab. It contained scientific instruments and an area for developing film. Ronnie suggested the name "Probe II" because she compared the vehicle to a space explorer.

This year the plan was to tour a north central state, several mountain states and parts of the Pacific Northwest. The adventures of the previous years were so memorable that the youngsters could hardly wait to start on their new explorations. Denver, Colorado, was the city where the group was to meet and begin their vacation on July 1.

Project Ideas:

PROBE II



ONE-WAY GLASS IN RESEARCH SECTION SIDE PANELS ALLOW VISIBILITY AS WELL AS PRIVACY.

REAR PANEL OPENS, ALLOWING ACCESS TO INTERIOR

CAMPING EQUIPMENT STORES UP AGAINST SIDES, BEHIND SEATS

JACK LOWERS WHEN VEHICLE SEPARATES TO SUPPORT REAR SECTION

RESEARCH PORTION OF VEHICLE SEATS FOUR, SIDES LIFT GULL-WING STYLE FOR EASY ACCESS TO ALL EQUIPMENT

HANDLES ABOVE WHEEL-WELLS ALLOW ENTRY TO DRIVEN MODULE (WINDOW LIFTS) AND OPEN SIDE PANELS OF RESEARCH SECTION.

MINI-LAB
NEGATIVE DEVELOPMENT
SCIENTIFIC EQUIPTMENT
SAMPLE STORAGE

THREE POINT POSITIVE LOCKING CONNECTS MODULE AND RESEARCH SECTIONS.

THE PROBE II DRIVEN MODULE

SEATS FOUR AND SEPARATES FROM LABORATORY SECTION FOR SAMPLE GATHERING.

POWER-PACK DRIVES THESE WHEELS THEY ALSO SERVE TO STEER VEHICLE

AUXILIARY STEERING/BALANCE WHEEL STORAGE WHEN VEHICLE TRAVELS WHOLE

AUXILIARY STEERING/BALANCE WHEEL. LOWERED INTO POSITION WHEN MODULE SEPARATES FROM RESEARCH/LAB SECTION.

TRIANGULATED WINDOWS PROVIDE GREAT STRUCTURAL RIGIDITY, YET ALLOW FOR GREAT VISIBILITY.

NOSE BUILT OF IMPACT-ABSORBING MATERIAL WHICH WILL REASSUME ITS FORM AFTER MILD IMPACT

BATTERY POWER-PACK PROVIDES SILENT POLLUTION FREE RUNNING. RECHARGEABLE.

FRONT DRIVE FOR SAFE HANDLING EVEN UNDER EXTREME CONDITIONS.

It was nearly midday when all the youngsters and their chaperones arrived at their destination. The weather was perfect for flying--clear, sunny and brisk. The nonstop flight originating from Sacramento landed first, followed by the New York flight. Finally, the Chicagoans arrived. The plane trips had given everyone a good idea of what the country looked like from the air. The youngsters had recognized plains, deserts, forests, rivers, mountains, valleys and cities.

Les and Bobby, who two years ago had experienced a frightening flight because of hailstones, were especially thrilled with this smooth flight.

The friends had not seen one another since the previous year. They were absolutely ecstatic at seeing one another again. "My, how each one of us has grown since last year," they remarked at different times. Even Jackie, who had become airsick, was already beginning to feel better. The flight attendant had made him comfortable. While the others had watched the movie, Jackie had taken a nap.

After collecting all their luggage and belongings, they ran to look at Probe II, their new vacation home on wheels. Jackie and Ronnie beamed with pride as their hard work during the year was rewarded by their friends' obvious

Project Ideas:

excitement over the new vehicle. Ronnie showed the group the industrial designer's sketch of Probe II, pointing out all the specialized features.

After everyone's curiosity was satisfied, the group headed toward the motel where their rooms had been reserved.

The motel, located about 16 miles from the airport, was in the southeastern part of the city. Much to everyone's delight, it contained a beautiful rectangular swimming pool, which was located in the rear of the motel. After receiving their accommodations, the group quickly changed into their swimsuits and took a refreshing swim in the pool. There could be no deep diving, because the pool was too shallow. Although most of them were accustomed to swimming in large public pools, all of them did manage to have lots of fun--all, that is, except Bobby. How he wished he could swim! All he could do was tread water. He made up his mind to learn how to swim so that he, too, could have as much fun as the others.

While they swam and relaxed under the glass sunroof, they naturally began to talk about the past year, when they had been away from one another at their own schools. As they shared their experiences, they soon began to realize that it had been a great semester for all of them.

Project Ideas:

Chris told them how proud he had been when the fourth-grade teachers had invited him to view the video/cassette program with their classes. The others had also had similar experiences. Jackie told them about the letters of congratulations he had received from the fourth graders saying how much they had learned from the videotapes on colonial and revolutionary America. Bobby had made a speech in the auditorium when the cassettes were shown and afterward answered questions from the excited audience. The video program had been a highlight on the television show "People and Places, U.S.A." The youngsters felt happy that their experiences could be shared with the other students in their schools.

The group realized how well they had worked together the past two summers and a feeling of a job well done came over them. They were happy and excited about the planned activities for their upcoming trip.

What a delightful beginning to their vacation! They were being treated to an elegant dinner in a downtown Denver restaurant. When they reached the restaurant, they stepped into a glass-enclosed elevator to take them to the thirtieth floor. As the elevator moved slowly upward, the view became more spectacular. Looking out at the nearby green foothills, they could see the stark craggy mountains beyond. As they neared the thirtieth floor, the

Project Ideas:

group could see the white caps of the mountain peaks. Not a sound could be heard in the elevator chamber, except for one softly spoken "Wow!" as each member of the group gazed out at the breathtaking beauty of nature before them.

The restaurant itself was a beautiful dining spot. Through the picture windows, the group could see all of Denver.

Most of the group had little trouble finding something they would enjoy eating. Ronnie, however, who wanted to maintain her weight, took a little extra time in ordering her dinner. She was aware of the proper amount of fats, vegetables, carbohydrates and proteins she needed for a balanced meal that would help keep her weight down. She had lost another 10 pounds on her program over the past year. She liked feeling and looking good and wanted to remain that way.

Everyone agreed that the delicious, well-prepared meal and the magnificent view amounted to one more delightful experience none of them would ever forget.

Project Ideas:

DENVER
★
COLORADO

Although the group was totally exhausted from the flight, everyone managed to awaken early the following morning--everyone, that is, except Jackie, who needed some urging to stir him from his bed. Imagine waking up to a cloudless sky--perfect for sightseeing!

The plan for the day was to visit the state capitol, the U.S. Mint and the Security Life Building, which was Denver's version of the Empire State Building.

The state capitol reminded the youngsters of the national Capitol in Washington, D.C., which they had visited the year before. As the group stood on the steps of the state capitol, they noticed a marker indicating that the spot was exactly 5,280 feet above sea level.

"Now I know why Denver is called the Mile High City, said Bobby.

Because Ronnie was a serious coin collector, she was particularly excited about visiting the U.S. Mint. The building was huge, with thick stone walls like those of a fortress. The group took a conducted tour and observed the machines that were stamping out coins from huge sheets of metal. The group was impressed when they found out that as many as 18,000,000 pennies and other coins were produced daily at that mint.

Next they went to the top floor of the observation deck of the Security Life Building.

Project Ideas:

There they were treated to a splendid view of the city.

It was a beautiful sunny day. They were able to observe clearly the Denver landmarks as well as Pike's Peak, which was also on their itinerary.

Bright and early the next morning, they traveled south on a state highway to the U.S. Air Force Academy. Nicky was interested in a career in aviation and was really looking forward to this part of the trip. She wanted so much to be an astronaut. From what she had read about N.A.S.A., she knew that two kinds of astronauts were selected--pilots and scientists. She was going to work very hard so that she would be admitted to the academy after she graduated from high school.

It was a short drive from the U.S. Air Force Academy to Manitou Springs, where the cog railway climbed to the summit of Pike's Peak.

"Pike's Peak or Bust," had cried the gold seekers of the 1850's, and this is just what the group was chanting as they hurriedly rushed to the ticket booth to purchase round-trip tickets.

They wanted the 5:15 P.M. sunset trip to the summit of the mountain. They climbed into the "vista-top" railway car. It was exciting to be in the railway car makings its way up the mountainside.

It took the group nearly two hours of travel

Project Ideas:

to reach their destination. They were now 14,110 feet above sea level. Stepping out of the railway car, they were absolutely shocked at the difference in temperature. Up high, it was 48° Fahrenheit, even though the temperature at the base of the mountain was 85° Fahrenheit.

Chris and Nicky had forgotten their sweaters and were beginning to shiver. They were happy to learn that there was a coffee shop where they could warm up.

The scenic views were remarkable, but what really impressed them was the absence of noise. Except for the people's voices, it was absolutely quiet--no birds flying, no city noises. What an eerie feeling!

The group decided to explore and meet again in an hour. They all scattered to view the panoramic sights from atop this mountain.

After the hour was up, they began to cluster at the designated departure spot. As other tourists boarded the train, Ronnie realized that someone was missing. Since the train was about to leave, Ronnie asked the conductor if the departure could be delayed.

"Just for a few minutes," was the response.

They went out in pairs to scout for the "missing person." They were searching frantically when they

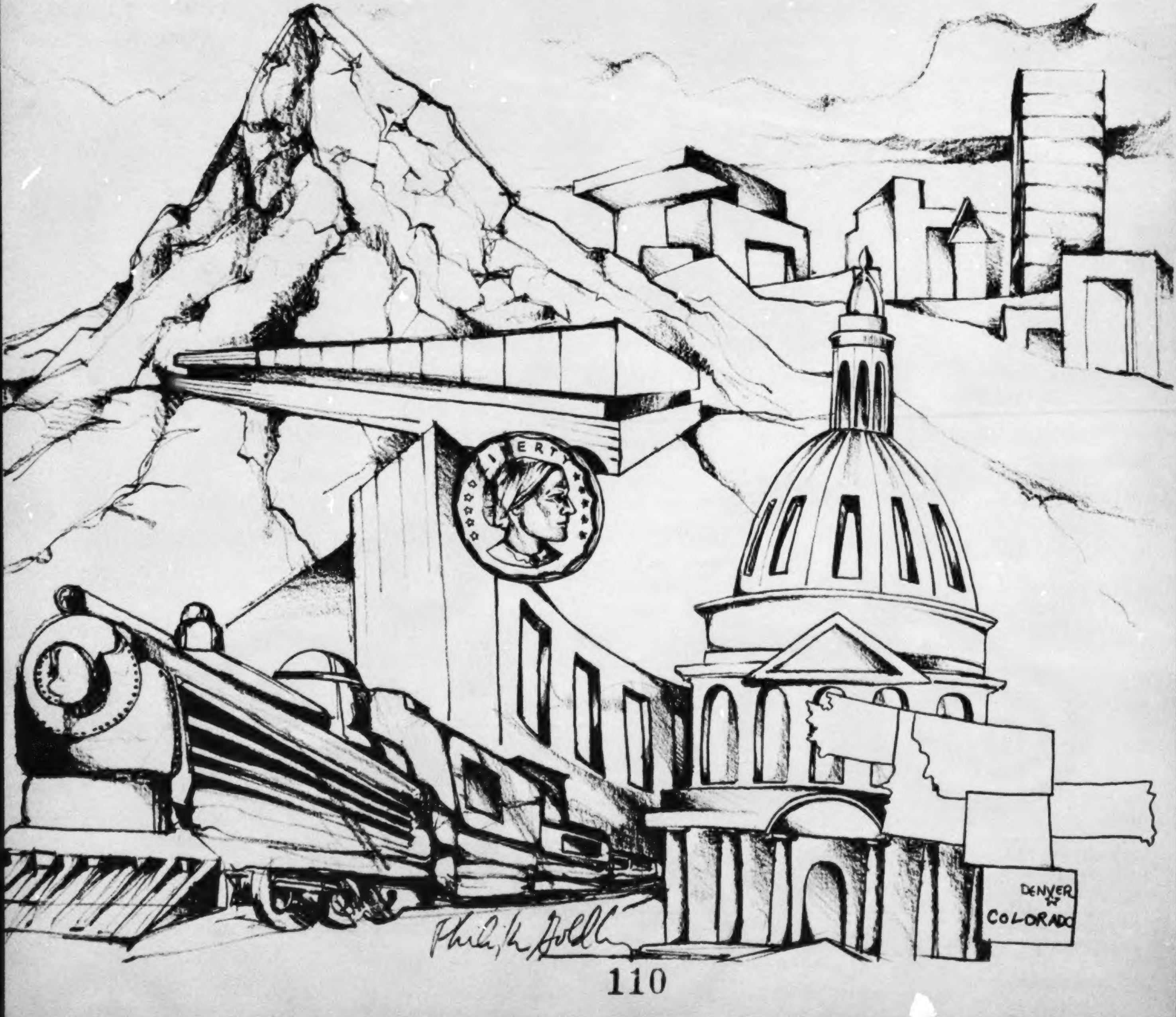
Project Ideas:

spotted Jackie's silhouette as he was leisurely walking up one of the trails. In unison, they shouted for him to hurry. It was fortunate that they found him so quickly because the last train for the day was just about ready to leave without them. When they boarded the train, everyone clapped.

The conductor remarked kindly, "You're a lucky fellow to have such good friends. I would have left without you!"

Although Jackie felt flustered and embarrassed, he was grateful that he had been found.

Project Ideas:


LIBERTY
DENVER
COLORADO

Since the distance from Manitou Springs to Boulder, Colorado, was about 85 miles, they got off to an early start the next morning. The plan was to get to Rocky Mountain National Park, first making a stopover at Boulder, where their chaperone had attended college.

Boulder, the home of the University of Colorado, was a quaint town. The attractive campus of the University of Colorado, founded in 1861, was very rustic, with beautiful red-tile-roofed buildings made of sandstone. Chris immediately recognized the type of stone that the buildings were made of because of his rock collection at home. He had a sample of this type of stone.

While they were driving from Boulder to the national park, Les decided to write her family a letter. This is what she wrote:

July 7

Dear Mom, Dad, Rodney and Linda,

So far, I am having a super time. We're on our way to Rocky Mountain National Park. We had an exciting time in Boulder. Lucky for us, Terry Brown, one of our chaperones, has a friend who lives in town. She invited us to spend a few days at her house.

Terry attended the University of Colorado while she was studying to be a geologist. She

Project Ideas:

gave us a tour of the campus. It really is beautiful! I decided that this is just the kind of college I want to attend. We had lunch in the cafeteria and made friends with some of the college students.

We're having a great time, but I still miss you. I'll write again soon.

Love,
Les

Since Les was writing a letter, Ronnie decided to do some writing as well. She took out her log, in which she kept a record of events and feelings. She wrote: "I'm in Probe II, on my way to Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado. It's great to be with the group again. After traveling with them for two summers, I feel that they have become like a second family to me. My own family is great, but it's nice to get away for a while. There were a few family problems at home before I left. I hope everything is okay now."

As Ronnie wrote, she recalled something Nicky had said. Nicky and Bobby were discussing what they had been doing since last summer and Nicky said, "For the most part, I had a great year, but sometimes things at home weren't so great."

Ronnie joined the conversation for a moment. "Yes, Nicky, I know what you mean. Too bad we

Project Ideas:

don't have time now. Maybe we can talk about it sometime later."

Nicky agreed, and the friends looked forward to the time when, at their leisure, they would talk about their family problems.

Ronnie was very strong and self-reliant. She knew, however, that everyone needs to talk about things that bother her or him. It was good to have friends who accepted her and to whom she could talk.

As they glanced out the windows of Probe II, on the way to Rocky Mountain National Park, only forested mountains could be seen. Ronnie read in her guidebook that the park is located in one of the highest regions in the country. The valleys are about 8,000 feet above sea level and some of the mountain peaks are 12,000 feet or higher. The park covers 405 square miles, and like so many other national parks in our country, it is a wildlife sanctuary.

Bobby had brought a pair of binoculars along. They took turns using them to see the bighorn sheep, elk, deer, and birds that they'd been told could be observed in great numbers. Les was hoping to spot a black bear. Nicky said that animals such as the mountain lion and the bobcat are seldom seen by people; they are afraid of people and keep away. This amused the youngsters because they'd thought

Project Ideas:

that only humans are afraid of animals and not the other way around. They began to reminisce about their trip to Yosemite National Park two years before. They were even more excited this time because they planned to do more hiking this year.

In addition to taking field trips and nature-study walks led by the naturalist rangers, the group planned to take a trail trip.

They were ready for their next excursion.

Project Ideas:

BOULDER
COLORADO

ESTES PARK, COLORADO

When the group finally arrived at Estes Park, a little village northwest of Denver, they found out that they were certainly not the only tourists! This little town was bustling with summer visitors on their way to explore the main attraction - Rocky Mountain National Park.

Campsites at the park could not be reserved in advance, so they considered themselves lucky when, with the help of the park ranger, they did locate a site for their planned two day stay.

Since Chris and Nicky were experienced riders, they were particularly interested in one of the exciting expeditions into the nearby wilderness areas, especially when they learned that the park contained 300 miles of bridle trails.

Chris tried to imagine putting the wilderness trails end to end and mentally calculated how long it would take to travel that distance on horseback.

Together the youngsters discussed the next day's plans. While Chris, Ronnie, Nicky and their chaperone would join one of the horseback expeditions, the others would explore one of the many trails with the park ranger.

Ronnie had never before been interested in horses, but her friendship with Chris and Nicky sparked her desire to try horseback riding. Even though she was enthusiastic about going, she was still very fearful.

Project Ideas:

Nicky and Chris reassured her, saying, "Don't worry, we'll take care of you!"

The group rose early the next morning, eager to get to the day's activities. They carried with them different-sized containers, from Probe II, with which to collect specimens along the trails.

A few years ago, the youngsters might have teased Ronnie about being too heavy for her horse, but this year no one did, because she had lost a lot of weight and looked very slim in her jeans, plaid shirt and western boots.

By the time Ronnie, Chris, Nicky and their chaperone arrived at the stables, the grooms were bringing out the horses. Chris immediately ran towards the palomino, which reminded him of the one he had so proudly ridden two years ago at the rodeo in Salinas. Nicky spied a pinto. The stories her grandfather had told her about the Native Americans in California and their riding ability attracted her to the horse. Ronnie didn't know which mount to choose, so she left it up to one of the grooms, who chose a mild-mannered gray horse named "Smokey." Ronnie felt 10 feet tall on Smokey's back, and, strangely enough, very comfortable as well. The sweaty palms and racing pulse she had experienced that morning disappeared.

The trail guide cautioned them to ride with care, since the horses could lose their footing on

Project Ideas:

the loose rocks if they went too fast.

As they rode, the youngsters learned why the Spanish had named the state Colorado. The name means "ruddy," and refers to the kind of red rock found in the area. After the youngsters explained their experiments on Probe II, they were permitted to take some of the red rock. Ronnie remembered reading that the rock formations of Colorado were varied, representative of almost every age in the geologic scale, from the Archean to the present.

From their "pedestal" on the horses, the youngsters were fascinated by the panoramic view of granite cliffs and spires. They were very glad they had worn sweaters, since the morning temperature was a brisk 54° Fahrenheit.

Nicky was happy to have brought the camera. Halfway through the trail, the guide allowed them time to dismount. Nicky photographed the meadows covered with flowers; forests of pine, spruce and fir trees, and a variety of animals in their natural habitat, like the American elk and mule deer. She couldn't wait to return to Probe II to develop the film. Her only regret was that she hadn't seen a cougar or coyote. The guide said that those animals could be glimpsed, at times, throughout lower and higher ranges of the park. Nicky also missed seeing the bighorn, the

Project Ideas:

largest of the American wild sheep. Its picture, when blown up, would have made a great poster for her room! Nicky learned from the guide that the bighorn's sandy brown coat turns grayish-brown in winter. The reason the sheep couldn't be seen was because these animals are high above the timberline--too high for them to be spotted from the trail. The bighorn are also known to be very timid.

They'd been riding for several hours, and even though they were stiff and tired, they were disappointed when they found themselves riding down the trail, back towards the stables. Their descent from the mountain trail was made more enjoyable when they sighted a beaver building its dam.

They were also pleasantly surprised to see Bobby, Jackie and Les fishing in one of the clear, pebble-bottomed streams. Nicky wondered what type of fish they would have for dinner. She hoped it would be rainbow, brook or cutthroat trout. These fish were most active in the runoff water from the glacier.

All too soon, the time to bid farewell to the horses, the guides and the other visitors had arrived. Ronnie, Chris, Nicky and chaperone each posed with their mounts and fed the horses a bit of sugar as a parting gift.

One of the grooms complimented Ronnie "I

Project Ideas:

can't believe you are a novice rider," she said.

Ronnie beamed with pride.

Later that night, the group, glowing with the warmth of sunburned skin and wonderfully exhausted from a full day of exercise, feasted on rainbow trout while swapping stories of the day's adventures.

Project Ideas:

SAMPLES
SAMPLES
SAMPLES
ROCKY MOUNTAIN STATE PARK
COLORADO

Their next stop was the southwestern part of South Dakota, sometimes called the Sunshine State. The trip from Rocky Mountain National Park was a lengthy one--they would have to pass through Wyoming to get there--so the group stopped midway, passing through Cheyenne and Torrington before resting in Lusk.

Wind Cave National Park is located in the Black Hills of South Dakota. If they had been traveling from the east, these hills would have appeared suddenly in the middle of hundreds of miles of open terrain. The range of mountains is an isolated one and rises more than 3,000 feet above the surrounding prairie. Ronnie had read that, according to legend, the Black Hills were formed by Paul Bunyan's burial of his blue ox, Babe. Jackie also remembered reading in the fifth grade about Paul Bunyon in a book of tall tales.

East of the Black Hills is the area known as the Badlands. Although the group's travel plans did not include visiting that area, their guide gave them some background information. "The name Badlands," the guide said, "comes from the words 'bad for traveling,' which fur traders used when speaking of this area. Its deep gorges and bare, towering rocks made it so. This area contains some of the most spectacular examples of weathering and erosion in the world. Many of the rock formations remind people of spires and castles."

The group was enlightened. They had thought that the word badlands referred to outlaws who roamed the west.

Project Ideas:

The guide continued. "In the Badlands, scientists found fossilized bones of prehistoric animals such as the titanothere (a grass eater) and the three-toed horse. We have some fossil specimens that were gathered from this area in the Visitors' Center at the Badlands National Monument headquarters. It's too bad you won't have the time to visit the area, because I know that you would have been absolutely fascinated."

Les was very disappointed. She had become interested in paleontology when her sister studied about it at college last year.

Jackie recorded notes about the guide's talk. He was keeping a log to help recall events of the trips. Each day he jotted down highlights of their activities. In the evening, before going to bed, he wrote this information in his log. Included was the date, the place visited, the weather conditions and a brief description of what was seen or what occurred that particular day. He sometimes included in the log information read from pamphlets or facts learned from the park rangers. On occasion, he made notes about the evening nature walks and campfire programs.

After visiting the Black Hills, Jackie wrote the following information in his log:

Project Ideas:

DATE: July 14
PLACE: South Dakota
WEATHER: Warm, sunny and clear. 76° F. Cumulus clouds.

We drove to Wind Cave National Park, located in the Black Hills, and the legend of Paul Bunyan came to life. I also learned something new when we stopped at a prairie-dog town on the way. Bobby, Les and Jackie thought they were going to see real dogs. Were they surprised when they saw these funny little animals with little beady eyes, short legs, pouched cheeks and short, flat tails! One of the prairie dogs seemed to be standing guard. We stopped at a roadside exhibit that explained these creatures' habits. This little rodent belongs to the ground squirrel family. It is about a foot long from head to tail and was named the prairie dog because of the loud bark it gives when an enemy approaches. It does this to warn other prairie dogs, and then it rushes safely into its home, deep in the ground.

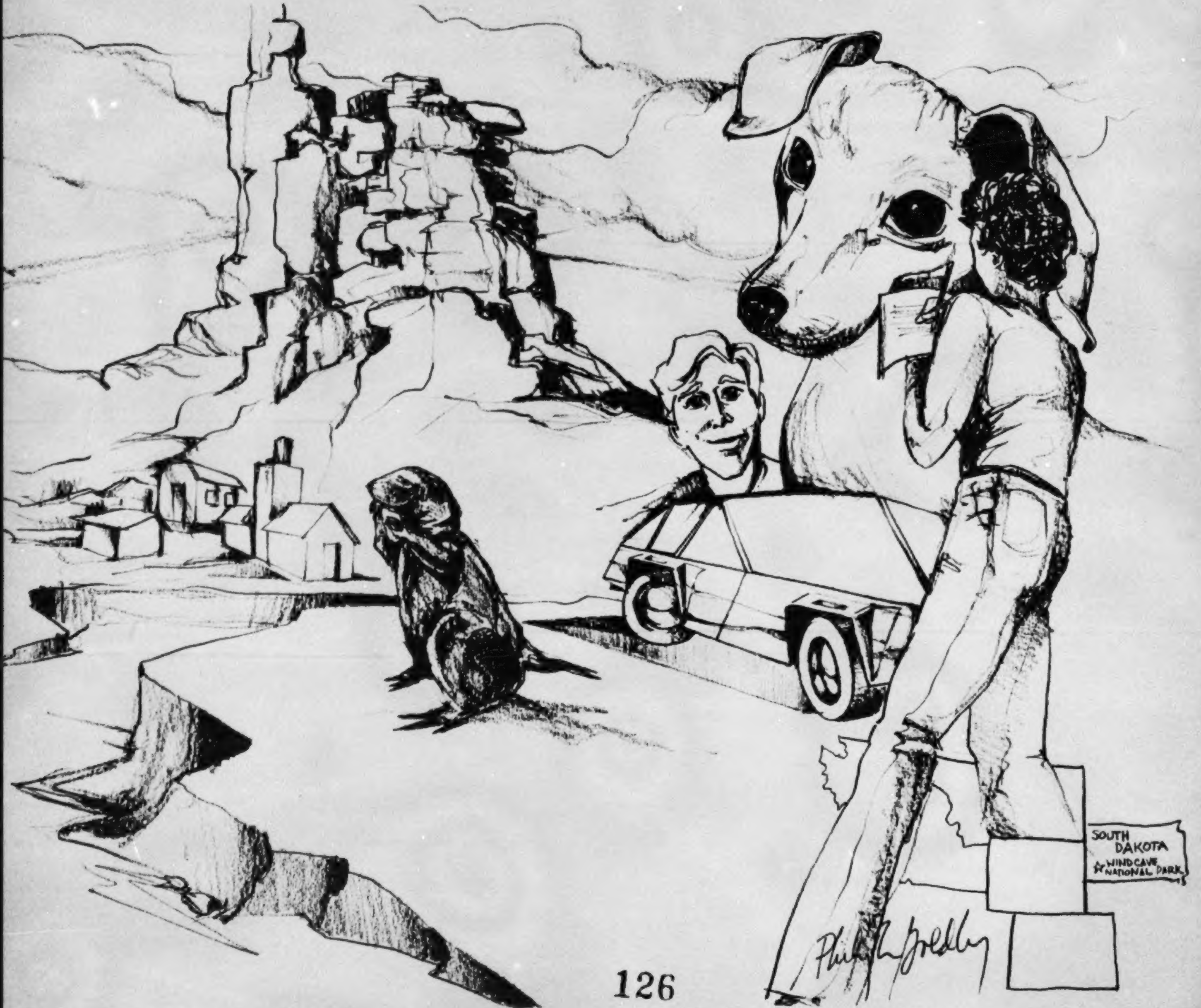
Chris wished that he could have one as a pet. The dogs reminded him of Muffin, his miniature dachshund, who as a puppy looked somewhat like a rodent. This was because it had been sick and lost some of its hair.

(End of log entry)

Project Ideas:

Even though it had been a hectic day, the group looked forward to their next day's venture to Mount Rushmore.

Project Ideas:


SOUTH DAKOTA
WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK

Mount Rushmore, with the faces of four famous Presidents carved in stone, was an impressive sight. The group agreed that Lincoln's face was the most perfect. His eyes seemed so lifelike. Theodore Roosevelt looked as if he were wearing glasses.

"It's just an optical illusion," said Nicky.

It was obvious to the children, upon learning that at least 2,000,000 people visited this shrine each year, that Mount Rushmore is a popular attraction. This memorial was begun in 1927 and completed in 1941. It is as high as a 5-story building--about 60 feet. Washington was the first figure on the granite mountain to be sculptured. The Jefferson head was the next to be completed, then Lincoln's, and finally, in 1939, Theodore Roosevelt's head was dedicated. The Mount Rushmore memorial is one of the world's largest sculptures.

They then made a brief stop in Custer, a city in the southern Black Hills. This area is rich in minerals such as feldspar, beryl and mica. Chris picked up a small sample of mica, which he promptly added to his rock collection. When he got back to Probe II, he carefully labeled the rock. Ronnie used the microscope to look at the mica more closely.

"Too bad you couldn't get a gold sample," said Bobby. "I've been told that one of the largest gold mines in the world is located in the Black Hills."

Project Ideas:

"I think they should have called this place 'Gold Hills' because of all the gold that is mined here," remarked Jackie.

The memorial honoring the Sioux Indian chief Crazy Horse interested the youngsters. The gigantic statue is 563 feet high and 641 feet long.

Their previous year's vacation had included a visit to a Native American reservation. Bobby had done a great deal of research about Native Americans in his social studies class. In fact, he had learned that the state takes its name from the Sioux Indian word "Dakota," meaning "allied tribes."

Although a stopover at Flintstone's Bedrock City was not on their itinerary, Ronnie, who had read practically all the Flintsone storybooks in print, begged Terry to make a brief stop. Luckily, there was time to spare, and they were able to stop at this life-sized village in Custer, one mile west on U.S. 16. The buildings, equipment and characters were from the cartoons on television. Nicky was busily clicking her camera, taking photographs of Ronnie, Chris and Les riding in Barney's car. While they were driving to their next destination, Bobby and Jackie drew their own cartoons.

Project Ideas:

The children felt that they had seen a great deal, but they were disappointed they could not remain longer in this area. Not one drop of rain had fallen during their stay. Now they truly understood why South Dakota is referred to as the Sunshine State.

The next morning they drove west toward Wyoming. Nicky, Chris and Bobby were sleepy and caught catnaps while the others took in the beautiful scenery. Les acted as navigator and helped Terry with travel directions. She had brought a compass from home to use during the trip.

A pleasant lunch stop at a roadside rest gave the group a break from the long drive and gave them a chance to stretch their legs.

"How different from New York," said Bobby. "Even though I love New York, this certainly is a treat. The remarkable beauty of this area makes me appreciate nature even more."

After quickly eating her lunch, Ronnie began to explore with her magnifying glass.

"I really feel happy and free, in these great outdoors," said Ronnie.

Les and Ronnie wanted to make a rubbing of the bark of a tree. They took a thin sheet of unlined paper and a thick crayon from Probe II. Next,

Project Ideas:

they placed the paper against the bark and rubbed the paper carefully and evenly with the crayon. They then labeled their rubbing and added it to their collection for later examination and identification.

The youngsters were collecting small, permanent samples that would later help them remember their trips.

Project Ideas:

SOUTH DAKOTA
☆MT. RUSHMORE

They were driving back into Wyoming, the state they had barely seen en route to Wind Cave National Park in South Dakota. They had not had enough time in Cheyenne, the capital of Wyoming, but the group had been able to see enough of the city to form an impression. Bobby and Les had felt that Cheyenne matched their easterner's image of the West. They had found it to be a clean, friendly little city, surrounded by wide open spaces. However, they had been disappointed that they could not be in Cheyenne for the "Frontier Days," a celebration of the city's western heritage. The celebration is also called the "World's Number One Rodeo." Authentic Native American dances, free chuckwagon breakfasts and colorful parades are some of the attractions that took place during that time.

Just the thought of a rodeo made Bobby recall his enjoyable experience two years ago at the rodeo in Salinas.

Since that time, Bobby had wanted to own a horse. The one he wanted the most was a Shetland, the smallest pony in the world. It would be easier to convince his parents that he could care for it in a large city. What fun it would be for his brothers and sisters and their friends to ride the horse!

Bobby had actually begun to learn about Shetlands when he had spoken with one of the ranch hands on Ms. Fernandez's ranch in California. The

Project Ideas:

ranch hand had told him that a Shetland pony is about 10 hands high--a hand, in the vocabulary of "horse people," being 4 inches. Horses are measured from hoof to shoulder. Bobby had also read many books about horses and often visited the zoo and circus back home, where he could pet, feed and learn more about animals.

While they were driving toward Grand Teton National Park, Ronnie was engrossed in reading all about Wyoming. Several facts were impressive and worth sharing with the group. Ronnie said that Wyoming is named the Equality State because Wyoming women were the first in the nation to vote, hold public office and serve on juries. Also, in 1924, Wyoming voters elected the first woman governor.

One of the special treats the group was looking forward to once they reached the park was their river trip on a raft. A trip down the Snake River in an inflatable rubber raft was planned. The name alone--Snake River--intrigued them.

When they arrived, they were not disappointed with their river trip. The Snake River poured through a valley, and on both sides of the river were forests of conifers and tall mountains. The group was told by their guide on the trip that the forests were filled with moose, deer, elk and more than 200 species of birds, from bee-sized hummingbirds to eagles. As they rode through, they saw an eagle soaring high above them. Fortunately, they had brought binoculars with them, and they were able to catch glimpses of this tremendous creature, our national bird. The youngsters

Project Ideas:

stared in wonder at the eagle. The guide told them, "Its wingspread may be up to 7 feet. You can tell it from a turkey vulture by the fact that its wings are held straight out from its body, and not tilted upward as the turkey vulture's wings are.

"The eagle is not bald. Its head feathers are snow white," Jackie said.

Bobby remarked, observing the bird in flight through the binoculars, "It does look bald, compared with its dark body."

The guide said "These wonderful birds are becoming scarce because humans are taking over their environments."

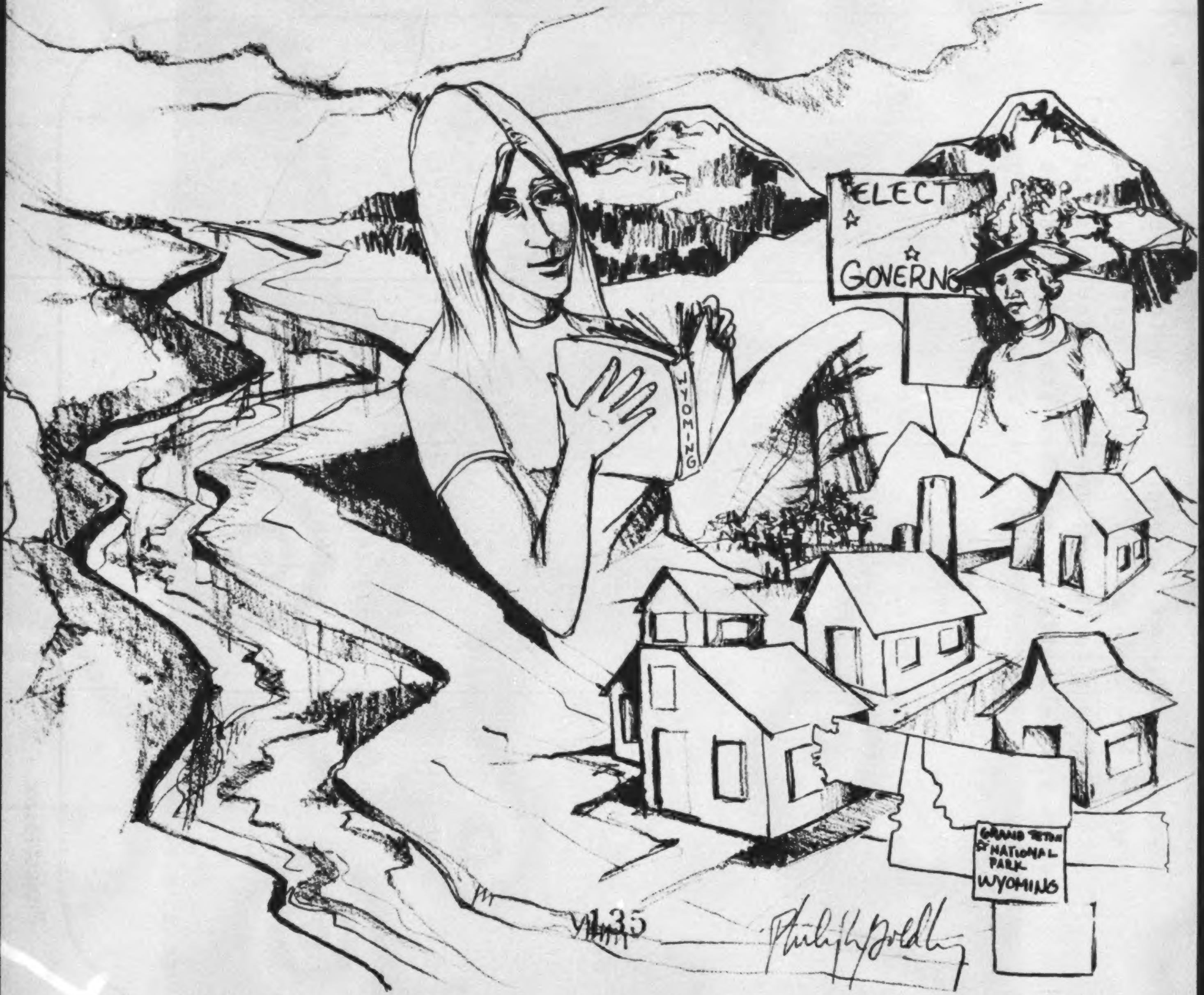
Nicky added, "I read that they play a very, very important part in keeping the balance of nature, by eating dead fish, rabbits and deer."

Chris said, "They're part of nature's recycling helpers."

The guide pointed out that this spectacular Grand Teton National Park, with its snow-capped peaks, deep-blue lakes and streams, and beautiful glaciers was similar in beauty to the Swiss Alps in Europe.

The group agreed that this summer they really felt like scientists probing our wonderful environmental resources.

Project Ideas:


ELECT ☆ ☆ GOVERNO
WYOMING
GRAND TETON ☆ NATIONAL PARK WYOMING

An entry from Jackie's diary:

Dear Diary:

It's almost midnight; my friends have been asleep for hours, and here I am writing by lantern and the light of the moon. I can't think of a more beautiful place to have insomnia than here in Glacier National Park.

We visited the Blackfeet Indians on their reservation, adjacent to the eastern end of the park. We even solved the "mystery of the midnight intruder," so I haven't had time to write.

Since we're leaving tomorrow, I wanted to fill you in on our adventures. This park is really an outdoor classroom. Our first day was spent visiting the Sperry Glacier. We were surprised at the thick covering of ice, even in the summer. Wow! This was even a great way to study geology! Everyone agreed that learning about our environment from textbooks is not enough. We really have to get out and probe our environment, as we have been doing this summer.

Ronnie had learned experiments about glaciers in school and demonstrated them in Probe II. By moving an ice cube over some sand, she showed us how a glacier erodes the surface of the land. The ice acts as a bulldozer.

We knew we couldn't pick the beautiful flowers we saw growing everywhere--the Indian paintbrush, the glacier lily and the pink monkey-flowers.

Project Ideas:

Luckily, we had our camera. We took photographs of the flowers so we would always be able to see the beautiful rainbow colors whenever we wanted to.

Our visit to the Blackfeet Indian Reservation was quite an experience. The Blackfeet told us of their ancestors, how they had received $1.5 million for their land in 1890, and how copper was discovered on their land.

Well, Diary, I've saved the best for last! Every night for the past three nights, we've had visitors to our campsite. The first night we spent here, a few of us were awakened by a rustling sound. Since the noise was muffled and we were tired from a long day of travel, we quickly fell back to sleep.

The next morning we were awakened by shouts from Ronnie, who was the cook for the week. After fumbling with my sleeping-bag zipper, I ran to our cooking site and discovered why Ronnie was so excited. The plastic insulated case that held our supply of breakfast food (bread and eggs) had been ripped open. All that remained were the bread wrappings, neat halves of eggshells and pieces of our once-sturdy hamper. I stared hungrily at the remains of what would have been fried eggs and French toast. My stomach grumbled in response.

After cleaning up the mess, we all talked at once, trying to guess who or what the intruder was, and if "it" would strike again! Bobby thought it was a bear, but the rest of us doubted it, since bears were not known to venture down to this level of

Project Ideas:

the park. Les wondered if some campers had done the damage. We didn't think so, since a hungry person would have carried off the whole container. Nicky and I both suspected it was a raccoon. We had seen some in the park and knew how clever they are and how they love to raid unprotected food.

Our conversation all day centered on catching our intruder. We vowed to stay awake all night if necessary. We also secured the food in the van and padlocked the door. The garbage from dinner was placed in plastic bags in the wire baskets near our campsite.

We started to "fade" at about ten o'clock but fought sleep for another few hours. At midnight, only Chris and I were awake, but not for long. The next morning we all were disappointed in ourselves for falling asleep, but since we saw nothing in our campsite that had been disturbed, we felt better.

On the way to the lake to wash, Chris discovered that our visitors had struck again. The wire trash baskets and their contents were strewn all over the ground. The husks of our corn on the cob were stripped clean of the few kernels that had been left. Seeing the corn, Nicky was almost certain that raccoons were the culprits. She had done some research on them and remembered reading of their fondness for new corn.

Well, Diary, the third night we stayed awake. We also set a trap, by leaving a dozen ears of corn in a nailed wooden crate near our campsite. It was

Project Ideas:

far enough away from us so we could watch unobserved. The waiting was endless! But our efforts were rewarded!

At about 2:00 A.M., two large furry animals came out of nowhere into our campsite. Almost as if pulled by a magnet, they headed toward the wooden crate. We all watched in amazement as one of the creatures tore open the box, while the other held it down. We were amazed at their teamwork and strength. As soon as the box was opened, the two animals went to work! They husked the corn quickly and then nibbled away at it. We were glad it was a bright moonlit night, so we could watch every minute of the action. Les had earlier set up her tripod and took photographs of this amazing scene. When the corn was gone, our two guests slowly faded into the darkness from where they came. Our mystery was solved!

The next day, our first activity was to develop the film. The pictures were amazing, and we all looked at them more than once. Raccoons! Such clever visitors! Les told us that she had seen raccoons in the Bronx. I don't know if they'll visit again tonight; I hope so. They are a sight to behold!

Goodnight diary. I'll write again soon.

Jackie

Project Ideas:

☆ GLACIER
NATIONAL
PARK
MONTANA

The following is part of a letter Bobby wrote to his family:

Mount Rainier, a towering, ice-clad, dormant volcano, was the next destination on our itinerary. We passed through Idaho to get there but were so exhausted during the trip that we saw little of the state. You could imagine our surprise when we arrived at Mount Rainier, only to find that the parking lot adjacent to the lodge was covered with snow! A huge snowplow was being used to clear the area. After parking Probe II, we ran out and immediately began having a snowball fight. What a strange feeling! Snowballs in summertime!

We soon discovered that many of the trails in Mount Rainier National Park were closed because of the heavy snow that still covered the ground. From our previous experiences, we had learned that in order to enjoy a park's spectacular scenery, one must hike, bike or ride horseback.

Later in the day, we were pleased to learn that the naturalist ranger was going to lead us on a short hike through one of the park trails. What fun we had! We were slipping and sliding all over the snow-clad hills. Jackie and Nicky were especially amused, and the ranger soon became annoyed with them. Before turning back, we had our last snowball fight.

No wonder there was so much snow in the area. The park ranger told us that the lower slopes of Mount Rainier receive from 50 to 75 inches of

Project Ideas:

precipitation yearly and that the higher slopes get more than 500 inches. In fact, during the 1955-56 season, the heaviest snowfall for one winter in the United States was recorded at over 1,000 inches.

Our visit to Mount Rainier, Washington State's best-known landmark, was cut short because of the snow. We decided instead to head toward our next destination in Washington State. This westernmost state is covered with deep, extensive forests. Driving toward Olympic National Park, we passed many trucks laden with timber. We were not surprised to learn that lumber and wood products, including paper, are some of the chief manufactured products of this state. Along the way, we also passed many sawmills with log-filled ponds.

Since park roads are built for people's enjoyment of the scenery, we had a leisurely drive on the twisting and bending roads. We had already discovered that each national park has its own unique features and Olympic National Park was no exception. This particular park contains an extraordinary rain-forest growth. It consists mainly of giant cone-bearing trees that rise to nearly 300 feet above the forest floor. These rain forests, which have good soil and exceptionally heavy rainfall, are almost like tropical jungles.

Project Ideas:

Ronnie and Jackie seemed particularly eager to arrive at the park. We knew that they had something up their sleeves because we caught them whispering so many times. What we did not realize was that we would be having the treat of our lives and the most important part of our vacation just ahead of us.

When we arrived at the Visitors' Center we were met by two people. Ronnie and Jackie greeted them by name and introduced the rest of us to them. They were scientists, named Jan and Phil. Ronnie and Jackie had worked with this team in helping to redesign Probe II.

The scientists led us to a huge object that looked like something from outer space. We were beginning to imagine that we had been transported to another planet.

We quickly became absorbed in the scientists' explanation. This "object from outer space," we were told, was a portable telecommunications transmitter. The scientists had planned for us to communicate with two of Jackie's pen pals in Europe.

We began to ask a variety of questions as to how this was possible. The scientists slowly and carefully explained what was going to happen. They would set up their video equipment in the Ground Exploring Module (GEM) and make use of the experimentally designed electronic equipment. GEM would then be able to send a microwave signal to the dish mounted on the trailer in the parking lot. This portable

Project Ideas:

telecommunications transmitter would then beam up a video signal to a United States satellite. The signal would then be relayed to an earth station in New Jersey connected by microwave to New York City. From there it would be bounced to an international satellite, and, instantaneously, the receiving station in England would receive the information.

It seemed amazing to us. The scientists explained some of the scientific and mathematical principles involved and used pictures to help us understand.

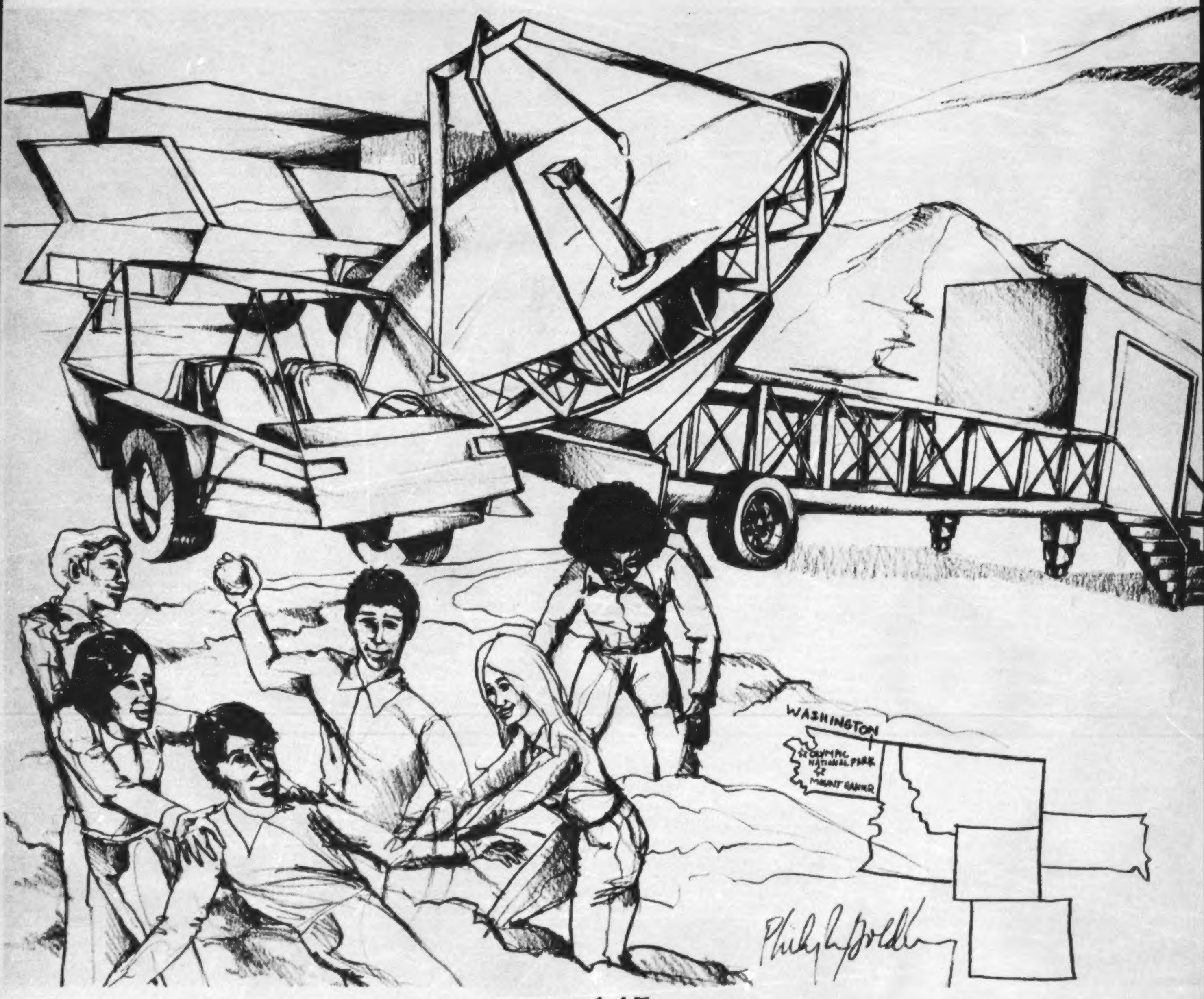
The purpose of all this was to study the animal life of this rain forest in its natural habitat. GEM was electrically powered, so it would not produce any sounds. Thus, the animals that sleep during the day and are active at night could also be observed; an infrared beam would provide the necessary illumination to help spot the animals.

The scientists further explained that, as GEM prowled through the rain forest, it would transmit pictures via the satellite to England, a nation in Europe thousands of miles away. The pictures would be broadcast live and recorded on tape.

Chris remarked, "I've seen this on television, but I never really thought it could be done."

Needless to say, we could hardly wait to begin our roving venture. This indeed would be a memorable experience.

Project Ideas:


WASHINGTON
OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK
MOUNT RAINIER

The group on the plane sat back and relaxed; each youngster was deep in thought. Their wonderful summer tour was over. There was just one last exciting stop to make before heading home.

They were on their way to Chicago to make another tape for the television show "People and Places, U.S.A." This show was extra special because it was to be the last program in the series on "Probing Our Wonderful Environmental Resources," nicknamed P.O.W.E.R. by the group.

They felt very sad to be saying good-bye to Probe II as they left Seattle, Washington. It had been more than just a vehicle to them. It had been their home for a while. Yet, they felt proud and happy that Jan and Phil, the two scientists who had helped to redesign Probe II, were driving it to Washington, D.C. There it would be put on display as a tribute to the achievements of young Americans.

EPILOGUE

The youngsters sat in a semicircle, waiting for their interviewers, Frances and Steve, to introduce them. Although they were a little nervous, they felt the closeness of good friends, which gave them confidence. They all looked wonderful as they proudly wore their P.O.W.E.R. T-Shirts.

The show began. Frances was saying, "I'm sure your tour this summer was as educational and

Project Ideas:

successful as the previous two summer tours of our country. America is waiting to learn what each one of you found to be most interesting. I know you have carefully prepared a twenty-minute presentation of slides and photographs. They are ready to be shown."

The pictures flashed on the television monitor in the studio. Each member of the group took turns explaining where the pictures were taken. They brought back some wonderful memories.

When pictures of Estes Park in Colorado were being shown, Chris spoke.

"I liked horseback riding there. They have three hundred miles of bridle trails. I'd love to go back someday soon and explore all of them. Because of the chance I had to explore our environment on horseback, I am planning to study all about horses and perhaps become a trainer."

"Do you have any plans for future tours?" Steve asked.

The group turned slightly to look at Ronnie. Ronnie spoke up.

"Les, Jackie and I were talking about continuing our explorations with three pen pals from Europe. Of course, we are just in the planning stage."

Frances asked, "Are you going to continue your studies of the United States?"

Les answered, "We would like to go to England

Project Ideas:

to do research on the biological ecology there, concentrating on the nighttime behavior of animals."

Jackie said that they planned a "Probe II-like" vehicle with more computerized research and satellite communications equipment.

"Nicky! Bobby! We haven't heard from you yet. Do you have any special plans for the future?"

Bobby spoke first. "Next summer I am planning to work in a special camp for overweight children. Ronnie has been a big help to me. To maintain her weight loss, she has set a very good example of proper nutrition. I knew Ronnie before she lost weight. Noticing how she looks and acts now has given me a better understanding of the problems of being overweight.

Nicky said, "I have been invited by a friend to help build and fly a remote-control model airplane. My ambition is to eventually become a pilot, and this would give me the training I need to start as a mechanic."

"I see our time is almost up," said Frances. "Do you have any advice you would like to give to other young Americans?"

The group knew this question would be asked, and Nicky was chosen to be their spokesperson.

"Our travels have increased our knowledge of the world around us by enabling us to experience and learn things firsthand. Then, too, without studying

Project Ideas:

language arts, math, science and social studies and applying our work-study skills, what we learned would have been meaningless to us.

"Our group worked as a team, its members cooperating with one another every step of the way. We took pride in one another's accomplishments. We learned one very important fact: Do the best you can!

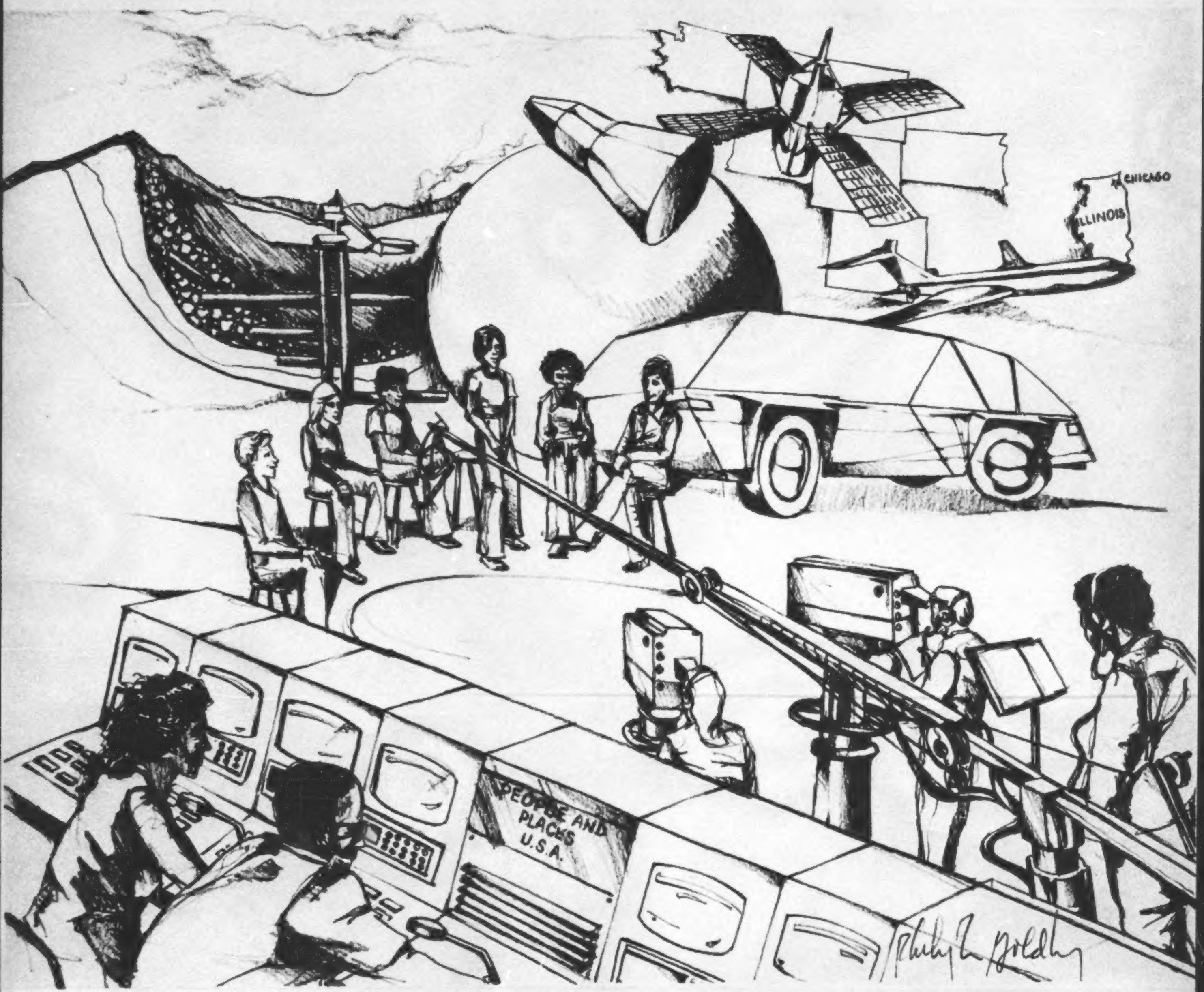
Learn, study, and you can be anything you want to be because you have the capability. You do not have to follow in anyone else's footsteps. You can set your own path and follow your own desires. We are happy because we've learned we can be what we want to be if we use the resources offered us."

Nicky sat down. The applause was almost deafening.

Frances and Steve thanked the group for being on the show. And then the "On the Air" light went out.

It was time to go home. They had come to the end. Or was it just the beginning?

Project Ideas: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